TERTULLIANS
APOLOGY,
OR
DEFENCE
OF THE
CHRISTIANS,
AGAINST THE
ACCUSATIONS
OF THE
GENTILES.

Now made English by *H. B.* Esq.

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TERTULLIAN'S

APOLOGY.

OR

DEFENCE

OF THE

CHRISTIANS.

TRANSLATED

INTO

ENGLISH.

To my honoured Father in Law,
ABRAHAM HAYNES. Esq.

SIR,

THis Excellent Peece of Tertullian (who lived about 1400. years since) falling into my hands, and perusing it, for an Essay, translated into English part therof. Some of my friends (who gave me a visit) read this beginning, and liking it (although they have the same in Latine) importuned me to finish what begun. Esteeming, it might bring some profit to the Christian

Religion; becauſe therin Tertullian *hath made ſuch a ſolid confutation of the errors of Paganiſme, and ſo perfectly repreſented the innocence of Chriſtians, againſt the falſe accuſations of the Gentiles; that in truth Religion could not be better defended, nor better perſwaded, then it is in this Divine Peece. That which makes mee appropriate it to you, for my particular, you are he, to whom I profeſſe my ſelfe,*

SIR, Your humble and affectionate

Son in Law,

HENRY BROVVN.

TO HIS HONOURED Friend, *Henry Brown* Esquire, Translator of the ensuing Discourse into the English tongue.

SIR,

IT is very commendable, when Gentlemen, to avoid the irksome sin of Idlenes, apply their minds unto studies beneficiall to themselves and others, in making Exotick tongues hold forth the truth of things in our Native Language. This (it cannot be gainsayd) in your late translation of

this rare Peece into Engliſh, you have done! It was written at firſt by *Tertullian*, the Author thereof, in Latine. Into how many ſeverall tongues it hath been tranſlated ſince, I cannot ſay; this I can, its worthy for the excellency thereof, to bee tranſlated into all tongues, the Contents being convincing Arguments for the proof of One God, againſt the Heathen Romans, who were then Worſhippers of Many. It were heartily to be Wiſhed, we of this Nation, could all of us bee as unanimous in the Profeſſion of One true Religion, as the Author of this Treatiſe earneſtly laboured to make thoſe unto whom hee wrot, in the Confeſſion of One true God. This, however, at preſent, wee may ſooner wiſh, then hope for, in theſe ſuffering and diſtracting times, you have ſeaſonably done, Chriſt being the Center, from whence all lines of truth tend to the Vniverſality of Religion, as to their Circumference, in laying to your helping hand for ſupporting the ſinking pillars of Chriſtianity, by tranſlating, out of a forraign

tongue,

tongue, what the Primitive Christians did, and suffered for the Name of Christ. Its high time to put pen to paper, and publish in our Mother tongue, *An Apologie, or Defence for Christians*, when men and women, nowadays, who would bee thought true children of our Mother the Church, secretly blaspheme, and openly call in question the Godhead of Christ. But as *I and my Father am one* (saith our Saviour in the Gospel) and therby declares himselfe consequently to be true God, so this *Apologie* sufficiently sets forth the truth of our Christian Faith. Which that it so doth in the English tongue, we are all beholding to you, for your pains alone, in this translation. The happy success wherof, together with a further blessing upon it, and your selfe from the Author of whatever blessings, God blessed for evermore, is heartily prayed for by him, who is,

Sir, Yours, much devoted to serve you,

THOMAS WESTLEY.

THE PREFACE.

THis Apologie or Defence is the Work of an excellent Orator, displaying all the forces of his wit, to uphold a most deplored cause in the opinion of the Gentiles, and yet the justest that ever was exposed to the judgement of men. Its Reader will easily comprehend the merit of this peece, so soon as know Tertullian the Author thereof, and its subject the defense of truth. 'Twas treated as criminall, with them who shut their eyes

to the lights therein, and would not thereby bee informed; Error seemed venerable to them for its antiquity: they preferred the darkneſse which blinded them for ſo many Ages, before the moſt excellent Sun-ſhine of divine light: although the accuſed made mention of in this Treatiſe were without ſpots, yet their accuſers endeavoured to find ſome, and obſcured their luſtre, whom they falſly accuſed with ſuch impurity, that it was neeeſſary men illuminated with the beams of divine ſplendor, ſhould employ the graces they received from heaven, to diſſipate the darkneſse of error, and diſcover to the world a truth which till then they were utterly ignorant of.

Tertullian was one of thoſe, God made uſe of to lay open or unfold ſo glorious a miniſtry; and certainly it was a labour worthy of him; Hee had enriched his mind with all the choice ornaments of humane Learning; was ignorant of nothing that was taught by any kind of Philoſophers, compleat he was in the knowledge of the Civill Lawes, had read the hiſtories of all Ages, made to himſelfe a treaſure of what every ſcience had moſt precious

in

in it, knew all the mysteries of idolatry, and was fully informed of the beginning and progresse of Superstition, having an understanding which made him capable of very great things: His Discourse was so powerfull, that one could not beare him without being perswaded by him; every of his Arguments rendring him victorious, at least over some of his Auditors. Hee was equally subtill and solid in his reasonings; he had united to those his sublime qualifications, a perfect understanding of the holy Scriptures: great piety and a marvellous zeale in the Religion of the true God. It appertained to a man, such as hee was, to defend the Christians against the calumnies of the Gentiles, to overthrow the Altars of the false Gods which Philosophy (as he saith himselfe) had set up to justifie the worship given by us to the Creator of the Universe.

Hee was an African, drawing his originall from a Noble Family of the City of Carthage: his Father was an Heathen, and commanded a Company of Souldiers, under the charge of the Governour of the Province. As himselfe tooke birth

from an idolatrous house, so brought up hee was in Error, but God giving him an inquisitive soule, he contented not himselfe with the knowledge of this world only, but also soared, and even penetrated into heaven, to get knowledge of divine truth. This saving well spring carefully laid up in the bosome of the Church, was the water of life hee chiefly thirsted after, which having once tasted of, he happily plunged himselfe therein, and took a full draught of the graces of God, swallowed up at the same time this precious liquor. Since when he ever after abhorred the fond blindnesse of foolish men, who attribute to miserable creatures the glory due to God.

Charity, the most excellent of Christian vertues, so lively inflamed his heart, that it made him undertake to instruct Infidels, to communicate his light unto them, to confirme them therein by the Authority of holy Scriptures, and by the strength of reason to ranke themselves with him, in the faith of Iesus Christ.

Hereupon it was he so powerfully resisted the vanity of Philosophy, which he formerly so delighted in, and knew to be the principall ground of Superstition,

ſtition. So that the ſame things hee beeretofore ſtudied to adorn his mind withall; and bring it to the knowledge of falſe Gods, whileſt hee lived under the ſervitude of Idolatry, by an admirable working of divine providence, ſerved him ſince his converſion as ſtrong inſtruments to deſtroy the worſhip of Idols.

Now it is very reaſonable that hee, who ſo earneſtly deſired the ſalvation of his enemies, ſhould have a particular care of his brethren, groaning under the weight of perſecutions, which Pagans made them ſuffer: As therefore he piouſly laboured to open the eyes of the Gentiles, and make them worſhip his Maſter, ſo he happily imployed himſelf likewiſe to repreſent to him the holineſſe of thoſe who moſt unjuſtly were charged with ſuch ſtrange crimes.

Two principall things hee equally endeavoured to ſet forth, namely the falſeneſſe of the Gods of the Gentiles, and the truth of one only God, and joyning together the defence of doctrine and manners, proved by one ſame work, the faith and innocence of Chriſtians.

Hee came into the Church neer the end of the second Age, about the time when Severus came to the Empire. The faithfull then enjoyed a profound peace after a furious war. The Emperour Marcus Aurelius, a wise Prince for the world, but too much addicted to the opinions of Philosophers, suffered the fourth Persecution to bee kindled, which being stirred up in the year of our Lord 164. by the fury of the people, and injustice of the Magistrates, who governed the Provinces, swept away an infinite number of the servants of GOD: Nevertheless, although some rest they had, in the year of our salvation 176. by the authority of that Prince, his forbidding upon pain of death, to accuse the Christians, for their Religion, by a just acknowledgement of the service hee had of their affection, when by the prayers of Christian souldiers, which were in his troops, heaven powred down a favourable shower, that refresht in extream necessity, the Army hee commanded in Germany. Yet this calm lasted not long, the quiet of this inconstant sea brought in with it an horrible tempest, especially on this side the Alps, where the City of

Vienna

Vienna and Lions saw the Rhosn dyed with the first bloud the members of Iesus Christ spilt in Gaule.

The people that durst not directly resist the will of the Emperour, transported with extreame rage against so many good people, began againe to trouble their rest, in the year 179, on other pretences than that of Religion: They accused them of supposed crimes, the horror whereof, made their names odious, and by this detestable subtilty dragd them unjustly before the Courts of Iustice; whereby they eluded the punishment established by the Emperour, against those who accused the Christians, and boldly glutted their cruelty on these innocents, whom they exposed to all kind of tortures, and in the end, inhumanely put them to death, for confessing the name of God only. This Persecution ended with the life of Marcus Aurelius.

The faithfull after so many sufferings, had rest under the Emperour Connodus, who transported with a bloudy outrage against all Orders of his State, by a secret judgement of God spared none but Christians.

And

And certainly it was by a visible miracle that this Prince, an enemy of all honesty, was not also an enemy of those in like maner that made profession of godlinesse, that this Prince who shed with so much tyranny, the blood of his people, should close the wounds by which came out that of the Christians, and that these Idolaters who before had no spectacle so agreeable to their madnesse as the punishments of the Faithfull, should cease to afflict them, in a time when their hands were so accustomed to slaughter.

Wee must acknowledge God, who inspires such motions as please him in the hearts of men, the author of this so strange wonder. Hee procured this peace to the Church, to the end hee might fortifie it against the assaults it was to endure soon after. Its certaine, during this tranquility it was much increased: the Gentiles moved to see such excellency in the Christians, the innocent carriage of their lives, could not consider thereof without astonishment. They admired the purity they saw shine in their actions. From thence sprang desire in them of discovering the cause of such perfection, and em-

ployed

ployed were they in the ſearch of its originall; which is truth. And after they had broken downe the vail, which hindred them from knowing the ſame, they embraced it with as much affection, as ever they ſtrove againſt it.

So not only the people, but thoſe alſo, whoſe birth and merit rayſed them to great dignities, followed the Croſſe of Jeſus Chriſt. They renounced their Idols, to conſecrate themſelves to the ſervice of the true God, and abandoned the Temples of the falſe Gods, that they might ſerve no other but that one God that created them. By this means Towns were peopled with Chriſtians, Armies made up of them, and the Senat of Rome, from whence flowed the Governours of all the World, filled with them every day. Theſe are the fruits which peace had produced, which the Church injoied ſince the Empire of Commodus.

Severus having found the Empire in this happy condition, left it not ſo. The Sovereigne power fell in his hands in the yeare of our Lord 195. At the beginning hee ſhewed no ſign of any averſion againſt the Chriſtians, but contrarily made

great esteem of them; witnessed their probity, and openly opposed the violence of the people when hee saw them most incensed to the Christians destruction. He had still before his eyes the benefit wherwith he was obliged to a Christian named Proculus Torpacion, *who heertofore restored him to his health, and by the remembrance of such a recovery, was so dear to him, that he alwayes kept this man neer him, so long as he lived; he durst not use violence to the Religion of him to woom he owed his life, so long as he was in the world, and his presence ready to reproove him of such ingratitude. The death of this Christian, time, and the revolution of affairs changed his mind unhappily to indignation.*

Hee had two Competitors in the Empire, Pisc-enius Niger (*who held* Syria, *and declared himselfe Emperour in the City of* Antioch) *and* Claudius Albinius (*who was Master of* Gaule *and* Britain,) Severus *accommodated himselfe to this man, and associated him with himselfe in the Empire, to defeat the other, and after overcomming* Niger (*who died of a hurt hee received in fighting*) *turned his thoughts unto procuring the ruin of* Albinius,

nius, *whom he had honored for no other purpose then to destroy him.* Albinius *being dead, he came back from* Gaule *victorious, and entring* Rome, *he was there received with publick acclamations, rejoycings, and such solemnities as Superstition had brought in, and which thwarted the holinesse of the Christians, thought they should offend God, if in shewing their affection to the Emperour, they mingled themselves in these dissolutions; but their piety passing with the Infidels for a crime, their enemies tooke occasion thereby to exclame against them, as against the enemies of the Emperour. Some think that* Severus *after hee had caused many Noble persons to bee put to death, of* Niger or Albinius *party, went to make War against the* Parthians, *and leaving the Government of the City of* Rome *to* Plautianus, *this man naturally cruell, and continuing the search after all those who had favoured the one or the other of these two parties, filling* Rome *with Funerals and mourning, began also the fifth Persecution against the Christians, not as complices of the factions which now began to be extinguished, but as guilty of high Treason, in neglecting to render to*

the Emperour at his return from Gaule, *their duties in like maner as his other people did.*

They that writ this fifth Persecution were stirred up at Rome *on this subject, on the only authority of* Plautianus, *have also writ it was in this time that* Tertullian *made this Apologie or Defence, to make known to the Gentiles the injustice of the usage the Christians had; And upon their account this Peece was published the seventh yeare of the Empire of* Severus, *which fell in the year of our Lord* 201. *But others more probably say, it was in the year of our Salvation* 204. *the tenth year of the Empire of* Severus, *when this Prince after he had overcome the* Parthians, *and established peace in the Empire, willing to smother the seed of troubles, wherwith it had beene so violently agitated, for bad unlawfull assemblies, and factious meetings; upon this occasion, pretence is taken to persecute the Christians with authority, as if in meeting to prayse* GOD, *they had violated the prohibition of the Emperour,*

Tertullian *in his Apologie or Defence, affirms, this last opinion to be the truest, shewing Christian*

meetings

meetings not to be factious meetings: Concluding it was not for this cauſe, that the before mentioned Inhibition was put forth. Neither is it unlikely, but this Apologie or Defence, that juſtifies Chriſtian Religion from the guilt of faction, practiſe and conſpiracie againſt the State, was after the Edict of Severus, *who commanding the Iudges to puniſh all ſeditious confederacies, had kindled againe the fire of Perſecution againſt the guiltleſſe.*

Howſoever it was, certaine it is, Tertullian *compoſed this Apologie or Defence in the reigne of* Severus, *during the greateſt heat of puniſhing the Chriſtians: he was then at* Rome, *and publiſhed this Book, without putting his name to it, that hee might not expoſe himſelfe to inevitable danger.*

Sparing the name of Severus *for the reſpect born to his dignity, he addreſt this Book to the Magiſtrates, who ſate every day in iudgement upon the faithfull, and condemned the true Religion without knowing it.*

Its impoſſible ſeriouſly to conſider this Peece without being raviſht therewith. Riches it hath that puts it into the rank of great Workes, and of force to make us confeſſe, that if it be to bee eſteemed for the reputation of its Author, it is alſo of more eſteem for its own merit. We may ſee therin rare vivacity of wit, incredible ſtore of high thoughts, and a mervaillous power of perſwading. Wee may receive there the light of an eminent Doctrine. We meet there with an infinite number of choice things. The conduct of it is admirable: Art hath nothing excellent, which is not judicially there obſerved. All the parts thereof are agreeable with the whole. In fine, its a perfect body, to which the Learned have given this commendation, that of all the Works of Tertullian, there is none to bee compared to this. All the following Ages have acknowledged, that the Church hath nothing more accompliſhed; and that Religion could not bee better defended, nor better perſwaded then it is in this Divine Peece.

The truth is, the ſtile is not ſo glorious, the phraſe rude and obſcure, and it ſeems as if every

one

one of its periods contayned a myſtery, the ſenſe therof is ſo hid. But we muſt pardon an Affrican, if it be not expreſſed with all the grace of the Latine Tongue: the fault is not ſo much in him, as in his Countrey. If his ſpeech hath not much Eloquence, it hath much vigor; His diſcourſe flatters not the ears, but works with vehemence, and impreſſeth powerfully on the mind of the Readers that which will perſwade him.

Now although Tertullian *hath not loftineſſe of ſpeech, yet we may ſay, hee hath written purely and not uſed tearms, which were not fit to declare vigorouſly what he conceived, and which are not found in the Authors of* Humane Learning, *and of civill right; all his words are Latin, but his phraſe ſtrange, and reliſheth of the ſtile of the Greeks, to which he was accuſtomed by his ordinary reading of their* Books. *Its this mixture that makes it obſcure, that the moſt able men meet with difficulties in his Workes; and the reaſon his Apologie or Defence ſhewes not its beauty, to all thoſe that makes uſe of it.*

There

There have crept in ſome opinions not now received, and which in that time were not condemned. He writes, Divels were ingendred by the conjunction of revolted Angels, with the daughters of men: he ſpeaks of the birth of the ſoule, as well as of that of the body, beleeving the child takes both his ſoul and his body from the ſubſtance of his father: he ſayes the ſoul cannot ſuffer alone (but he is not conſtant in his opinion) and teaches, that the ſouls of the wicked ſuffer in hell, although ſeparated from the matter, and their bodies reſt in the grave, which is the doctrine of the Catholicke Church. Hee mentions Paradiſe, as a place of delights, different from that in heaven, and ſeparated from the world, by the interpoſition of a Zone of fire, where he beleeves the juſt goe after death, to remain till the day of the Lord. And in concluſion, lets ſlip ſomething from his pen of the age of a thouſand years interpoſed between the end of this world, and eternity: He is of opinion alſo, that during the courſe of theſe thouſand yeares, Ieſus Chriſt ſhall raign on the earth with his elect, that in the mean time, the juſt being rayſed out of their graves,

graves, shall live with abundance of spiritual felicity, and that this age being come to its period, the Son of God shall then make his universall judgement. It is enough we have taken notice of these opinions, which were not yet errors in the time of Tertullian; the Church then not having pronounced any thing to the contrary, they contented themselves then to preach the truth of one God in three Persons, the mystery of the Birth, Life, and Death of Iesus Christ, the institution of the Sacraments, the judgement of the Lord, the glory of the blessed in heaven, and eternall punishments prepared for the wicked in hell.

Our Tertullian hath so well establisht this doctrine, so perfectly represented the innocence of Christians, by this Apologie or Defence, that all the Church had this Book in singular reverence: they esteemed it as a precious Cabinet, where the evidences of its faith are kept, the proofs of its ancient discipline, and marks of the holinesse of its first children

It seemes to me that England deserves to have this Peece in its Language, that Learned men may

to this Nation so rich a Present; for although Translations are not much esteemed in this Age, where every one adores his own inventions, yet this, (how meanly soever translated) may bee well received, because of the dignity of the matter. I have undertaken it for those, who not knowing the language of the Mistresse of the World, cannot know the perfection of so excellent a production of wit, if it appear not to their eyes with its graces in the Mother tongue of their native Country. This Work might have met with a better Pen then mine, but not a faithfuller; I aspire not to the glory of writing well, but only, of being an Interpreter of an Author, who, in the judgement of the Learned, hath no fewer thorns, then flowers.

Tertullians *Apologie, or Defenſe of the Chriſtians, againſt the accuſations of the Gentiles.*

CHAPTER I.

SIRS:

IF the Authority of Juſtice bee ſubject to ſo intollerable a neceſſity, as you that hold the firſt places of the Roman Empire, (who in the dignity of your Magiſtracy, being expoſed to the eyes of all the world, judge men in the moſt eminent place of this Capitoll City of the Univerſe) have not the liberty to examine publickly and in the view of the people under your conduct, wherein the things conſiſt whereof the Chriſtians are accuſed, and which they propoſe for the proofe of their innocence: If upon this occaſion only you feare, or are aſhamed to labour openly to finde out the truth, and to inſtruct your ſelves by

the order the Lawes have eſtabliſhed ; or if the ſeverity you have exerciſed againſt the Chriſtians ſubject to your domeſticke power, incenſing your mindes with too much fury againſt our Religion, makes you bring from your home a reſolution to condemn us, and not ſo much as hear the reaſons ſerving for our defence: Be pleaſed we preſent you this truth in ſecret, and permit us to diſcover the ſame to you in paper, ſeeing wee cannot make you underſtand it by word of mouth. She demands no favour of you ; becauſe her condition permits her not to hope for a uſage eaſier then that ſhe hath formerly received ; ſhe knowes her ſelfe a ſtranger on earth, and doubts not to meet with enemies in a Countrey thats not her owne ; as ſhee derives her originall from Heaven, ſo there makes ſhe her principall reſidence, where ſhee hath moſt hope, where her beſt credit is, and where her dignity ſhines in its greateſt luſtre. That which ſhee deſires of you whileſt ſhe remaines heer below, is only you would not condemne her unknown. The Lawes of the State will loſe nothing of their Authority, if you permit her but to defend her ſelfe ; their power on the contrary will be ſeen with more luſter if you condemne her after you have heard her: but if you judge her without knowing her cauſe, you will not only ſtand charged with reproach of manifeſt injuſtice; but be juſtly ſuſpected your conſciences check you with ſome ſecret motions, that make you refuſe to heare the thing you could not condemne if you heard it. Wee ſay then, ignorance is the firſt cauſe that makes the hatred unjuſt

unjust you have conceived against the name of Christians; indeed wee are unholy in your opinion, because you are not informed of the holines of our doctrine. But take heed what seems to serve you for an excuse, be not that which renders your judgement of us faulty. For is there any thing more unjust then to hate that you know not, although it were otherwise even a thing to bee hated? As bad as any thing is it begins not to deserve hatred, till it be known to deserve it; while you know not what it is,, how is it possible you should rightly hate it? To make the hatred of any thing just, it sufficeth not the thing it selfe be evill, but that the party who hates the same knows it to be evill in like maner; seeing therefore you hate us without knowing wherefore, how appears it you hate us not without a cause, and consequently most unjustly? in regard whereof wee have good reason to reprehend you, because you know us not (to wit) in our condition when you hate us, and therefore hate us most unjustly. Certainly you pursue us with so much animosity, that it well appears you know not in what manner wee live; and affect an ignorance that condemnes rather then excuseth you of injustice. For we see a great many whose hatred is grounded on the want of knowledge onely, who so soone as they cease from being ignorant of our discipline, cease at the same time to bear hatred against us. It is of these sort of men that Christians are made: they embrace our religion after informed in the Piety thereof, when hating what they sometimes were, they make publick profession of that

they hated before; the number of these men is so great, that it will astonish you when but hear them reckoned up. And from thence it comes the people complain highly that the City of Rome is invironed on all sides with the enemies of the worship of the Gods, that Christians are spred over all the Empire, that the provinces are full of them; they bewail it as a signall mischiefe and as a considerable losse, because persons of all qualities and ages, men of all conditions, even those who have attained to great dignities, run promiscuously on this side. The progresse Christianity hath made cannot make them judge well of us, and the examples before their eyes puts not this thought in their mindes, that a religion that drawes all the world after it must have something excellent and divine that they know not of. The constancy wherewith wee suffer their persecutions is not able to move them, to better opinions of us then those they have formerly conceived: they will not particularly be informed of our Doctrine, wherin only they care not for, being over curious, and take as much delight to bee ignorant of this, as others to know all things. O how would *Anacharsis* have judged these rather imprudent for giving their judgement upon men wiser then themselves, then formerly hee taxed those of folly, who themselves being altogether immusicall, gave their judgement touching Musicke. Seemed it not the policy of the Athenians ridiculous to him, when hee saw among them the learned exposed to the judgement of ignorant men? Truly the blindenesse of our enemies far surpasseth this,

this, in regard they are so hardned in the hatred they beare towards us, that because not being obliged to relinquish it, they care not for being made acquainted with our condition: much doubting what they are ignorant of, is of such quality, that it will not be in their power to hate it, if once acquainted but with the merit therof. Now if hatred have not a lawfull cause, we cannot too soon extinguish it, and if justly kindled, it imports that the subject which hath given it a being bee examined; because if it be found it hath justice on its side, not onely this testimony takes nothing away from its force, but seemes to take new forces, authorising it the more. You say, to prove the holinesse of our doctrine, we should not boast in that which shee insinuateth into the mind, and that she gaineth so much people; for wee see very many change their good customes into bad, that it is not a new thing souldiers revolting from their owne party quit their Ensignes, to cast themselves into the troops of their enemies. Wee agree with you in this; but experience also teacheth us, that even they that suffer themselves to be surprised with unruly affections, are not assured of defending the disorders of their life, and dare not undertake to make them passe for good actions; Nature hath tied to evill, fear or shame, the wicked seeke for darkenesse, tremble when they are surprised, and deny all when accused: One can hardly draw the truth from their mouthes no not in the middest of tortures, and when their sentence is pronounced, they have recourse to teares and sighs.

They examine their consciences, and remembring the number of their crimes, they impute it to destiny & the stars, and wil not acknowledge they have been carried to it by their consent, because they know they are wicked and punishable things. Do the Christians any such thing? They are not ashamed when discovered what they are, they repent not, unlesse it bee that they had not sooner followed the Law of Jesus Christ, they esteeme it a glory to bee put into the hands of Justice, if accused they defend not themselves, when interrogated they confesse willingly, and when condemned they declare themselves thankfull to their Judges. What is that evill that hath not the quality of evill? which is neither accompanied with feare nor shame? who know not the artifices the accused make use of to gaine time, and deferr judgement? Who are not affected with repentings, or complaints wherwith Criminalls use ordinarily to deplore the sadness of their conditiõ? was there ever an evill of this nature? Did any ever see Criminalls rejoyce in the torments they endure? Who desire to bee accused? Who make much of punishment? and of their pain make their felicity? Doe not say the constancy wee shew is rather a mark of despair then of vertue, for you cannot judge safely of our actions, seeing you cannot know the motions they produce.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

IF notwithstanding you cannot part with the opinion you have conceived, but beleeve us indeed guilty, why are wee handled otherwise then they who, being like us, are in like maner guilty? Seeing by the rules of justice the same fault ought to have the same maner of punishment. When men, not of our Religion are accused of the same crimes they impute to us, it is permitted them to have their innocency made knowne, to defend themselves by word of mouth, to take counsell of an Advocate; they are suffered to give an answer unto what objected against them, and to make good their justification: for the Laws do not allow those to bee condemned whose offences have not been heard. It is only from the Christians they take the liberty to speak in their justification, to uphold the truth, and to declare to the Judges the things they ought necessarily to know, that their judgements might not bee suspected of injustice. They require for the condemning of us, but only the confession of the name Christian, they stay not till the crimes wherewith they charge us be examined, and it is the confession only that expoſeth us to publick hatred. When you put up a processe against a Criminall, you doe not pronounce his condemnation so soon as confest hee is a murtherer, sacrilegious, incestuous, an enemy of the State, which are the titles they give us: But you examine

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the circumstances, you consider the qualities of the fact, in what place, in what maner, and at what time the crime was committed, then you informe your selves against the complices; you do not keep these forms when you proceed against us, and yet you will condemne us without shew of justice; you must make us appear guilty of the things which are falsly imputed to us; for example, how many children a Christian denounced after inhumanely cut their throats, how many times darkness give him the assurance of satiating his incontinency with incestuous imbraces, who the Cooks dressed the flesh of these bodies so cruelly murthered, & of what sort the dogs (as you suppose) brought into our assemblies, to serve to put out the lights. Oh what great glory to a Judge to have convinced by due proof a Christian to have eaten the flesh of an hundred children? seeing we read it hath otherwise beene heeretofore forbid even so much as to make any maner of inquiry after us. *Pliny* the second, whilest Governor of Asia, after sentencing to death many Christians, & depriving others of their dignities, wondred his severity did not diminish their number, and consulted with the Emperour *Trajan* to know in what maner hee should governe for the time to come, in the behalf of Christians that should bee presented to him. Hee wrot to him that besides their firm resolution of not sacrificing to the Gods, he could learn no other thing touching their Religion, but of their assembling together before day to sing prayses to Jesus Christ, and to God, and to unite their wills to the conservation of the discipline esta-

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blished amongst them: forbidding expressly murder, adultery, fraud, perfidiousnesse, and other crimes. *Trajan* by way of answer, returnes him a command not to make inquiry after them, but being brought before him to punish them. O judgement wrapt up in a necessary and inexplicable ambiguity. ! How is it possible to accord things so opposite ? Hee forbids to seek after Christians, as being innocent, and commands to punish them as criminalls. He is mercifull and cruell, pardons, and punisheth at the same time. How comes it you are contrary to your selves, that your owne judgement beares witnesse of your own injustice ? If you think wee deserve punishment, why forbid to enquire after us ? If thought fitting not to enquire after us, why then not acquit us ? Provosts are established in all Provinces, to discover and take theeves. Arms are lawfull in the hands of all men to be employed against traytors, and against the enemies of the State. When once made acquainted with a villany committed, wee apprehend in the pursuit all wee suspect to bee partakers with them that commit it. They are only Christians are forbid to be sought after, and yet permitted at the same time to bee dragd before the Tribunalls of Justice, as if the enquiry made to no other end then to present men before the Judges. So you condemn a Christian when once found out, although according to the design of your Lawes, hee should bee assured against all searches; and when you condemn them, Idoe not beleeve you judge them worthy of the punishment you ordain them, because guilty, but onely

becauſe diſcovered, and that there are people found bold enough to enquire of their life againſt the publick ordinances. But when a Chriſtian is in your hands, you doe not act againſt him as you are uſed to act when you would purſue the vengeance of a crime, for when the other accuſed boldly maintaine they are not guilty, you ordayn they ſhould bee put to the rack, to the end that torrure may force them to confeſſe, and contrarily you apply it to the Chriſtians only to force them to deny. If our Religion were evill, without doubt wee ſhould flie to denyings in the ſame maner as criminalls doe, and you would be forced to draw confeſſions from us by the force of torments; you ſay you doe not think your ſelves obliged to ſeek by torrures the proofe of the evill we doe, becauſe you certainly beleeve the confeſſion of the name Chriſtian carries enough with it of all crimes. But this is pretence is not lawfull: for if a man be accuſed of murder, although you know well enough of what nature his crime is, yet you doe not content your ſelves with the confeſſion, but you force him to declare the order hee took to commit it; you doe not deal ſo with us, and the ſtrangeneſs of your proceeding diſcovers viſibly your injuſtice. You hold that to confeſſe the name Chriſtian makes us guilty, and you make uſe of violence to force us to retract it, in diſavowing the name of Chriſtian, we diſcharge our ſelves, at the ſame time of the crimes you impute to us becauſe of this confeſſion. But I think you do ſo, becauſe you will not have us deſtroy our ſelves, wee whom you take for

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execrable persons: It may be you are wont to bid a murtherer deny the murther he is accused of, and injoyne a sacrilegious person to suffer more torments if he persevers in confessing his impiety. Now seeing you proceede not against us as against Criminalls, its a signe you thinke us very innocent; Then therfore it is without doubt you will not have us persist in this confession, whereas you know very well that condemnation is grounded on the necessity imposed on you to obey the lawes of the state, and not on the rules of justice. A man cryes out in the midst of his torments, and saith, I am a Christian, he declares openly what he is; you would heare from his mouth what he is not. You are resolved, purposed, determined to draw the proofe of the truth by the confession of the accused, and of all other men, but there are none but we of whom you strive to heare lies. You ask me (saith one of us) if I be a Christian, and I answer, I am. Why endeavour you to corrupt me by force of tortures? I confesse and you torment mee. What would you doe if I should deny? when those that are guilty protest they are innocent; you believe not the truth from their words; and you believe us so soone as wee say wee are not Christians. Certainely this unjust affection which so unhappily troubles your reason, is to be suspected, and ought to make you thinke ther's some secret violence that workes in your minds, and makes you proceed in our cause against the order and nature of judgement, and also against the Laws. If I bee not deceived the laws command us to discover, and not conceale of-

offenders in withdrawing them from punishment, it ordaines that those who confess themselves guilty should be condemned, and not absolved.

These are the rules established by the authority of your Senate, and custome of your Princes: these are the maximes which are in use in the exercise of the power whereof you are ministers; for the authority of your magistracy is lawfull, and not Tyranicall. Tyrants are accustomed to add tortures to ordinary punishments to render them more cruell: but as your pollicy is full of humanity, you make no use of it, but force the accused to confesse. Keepe this Law in its vigour, and stretch it not further then its bounds; its necessary to draw confession from the mouth of criminalls, but if they prevent its rigour men must not use it, there remaines nothing in this case but to judge and punish it. Punishment established by the laws is a debt which they are bound to acquit, and whereof its unjust to discharge it after it is confest. Indeed wee see nojudge that strives openly to save a wicked person. Neither is he permitted to have a will to it; and from thence it comes in order of judgement wee doe not force men to denie. You believe a man cannot make profession of Christianity without being tainted with all sorts of crimes; without being an enemy to the Gods, to Princes, to the lawes, to good manners, and to nature, andthat a Christian cannot be acquitted unless he denyes himselfe to be a Christian; you force him to deny that you may acquit him, which is apparently tobetraye the justice of the lawes. What? would

would you have him deny he is guiltie that you may make him innocẽt, even against his wil, & that a man cannnot after impute to him what is past to render him criminall? tell us what motion inspires you with an affection so unreasonable? and from whence comes it you resolve not to believe him that voluntarily confesseth rather then the party that denyes what hee is accused of by constraint: This last being forced in his judgement may speake against his conscience, and keeping in his heart the Christian Religion, after hee is absolved, deride you at the same time you come to judge him, because of the partiality you shew in maintaining your opinions at the charge of justice. Now seeing you treat us in every thing otherwise then criminalls, and your onely end is to make us foregoe the name wee beare, (and wee undoubtedly relinquish the same if wee doe what they doe who are not Christians) you may easily apprehend we are not guiltie of any wickednesse: that our being named Christians is our onely crime, that his appellation is unjustly prosecuted by the motions of a rash and blinde hatred, whereof the first effect is to take from men the desire of knowing certainly the things which they know they have no assured knowledge of at all. So they believe all that is published against us, although they see no proofes, and they will not let our lives be enquired after, for feare a lawfull proceeding discover onely the things they will not have to bee believed to bee true, and they take occasion to condemne this name, which is the object of their hatred, on the onely confession wee

make as if the confeſſion of the name were ſufficient for the conviction of thoſe crimes, they attribute to it without any other ground then their owne opinion. Then as our contention is but a contention about a name, they torment us when wee confeſſe it, they puniſh our conſtancy, and acquit us when wee denie it. But after all, when you pronounce ſentence againſt a Chriſtian, why doe you not declare another cauſe of his condemnation then that hee is a Chriſtian? Why ſay you not hee is guilty of murther, and of inceſt? that he hath committed all other crimes imputed to us by your ſelves. It ſeemes there are none but wee againſt whom you are aſhamed to pronounce judgement under the notion of theſe execrable actions. If the name of Chriſtian bee not a name of naughtineſſe, then what you attribute to it is nothing pertinent, it being the name onely, and not any wickedneſs that name importeth, which you finde fault with.

CHAP. III.

But is it not a ſtrange thing, that the hatred, wherewith this name is purſued, in ſuch manner blinds the minds of moſt men, that when witneſs the probity of a Chriſtian, they mixe in their diſcourſe as a reproach that he hath embraced this Religion? One ſaith, truly he of whom you ſpeake is an honeſt man, if hee were not a Chriſtian, and his life

life would bee free from blame. Another, doe you know such a one who had the reputation of a wise and discreet man, he is lately turned Christian? and there is no body reproves and shewes them it is more to the purpose to reason thus: Therefore such a one is an honest man, or this who is so wise and modest hath got these rare qualities since making profession of Christianity: or else, such like men make it appeare visibly they are Christians, because they are wise and vertuous, they prayse the thing they know, and blame what they know not, and corrupt the purity of handsome actions, whereof eye-witnesses, by the opposition of a quality whose merit is unknowne to them, although it is more just to judge of things that appeare not, by those that appeare; then to ground on hidden things the condemnation of those which are apparent. There are others found that keeping company with those they knew before they were Christians to bee vagabonds, infamous, and wicked, now prayse them, who observed the irregularity of their life past. These people by an extreame blindenesse of hatred, speak to the advantage of the name Christian when they strive to render it odious. For say they, how pleasant and of what a good humour was that woman? How sociable and joviall was that man? Its pity they should bee Christians. So they impute the amendment of their lives to the profession of Christianity. Some of them also purchase the aversion they carry against the name Christian which wee beare, with

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the price of what is moſt precious to them, rather deſiring to loſe the ſweetneſs of life, tranquility of minde, and all ſorts of Commodities, then to ſee in their houſes that which they hate.

A man who heretofore had his minde full of jealouſie, can no longer endure the company of his Wife, what aſſurance ſoever he hath of her Chaſtitie, after once he perceives her to bee turned Chriſtian, and parts from her now when her actions (full of modeſty) have extinguiſhed all ſuſpitions wherewith he was heretofore moved.

A Father, who of a long time endur'd the diſobedience of his heathenish Son, reſolves to take from him the hope of ſucceeding him in his inheritance, for turning Chriſtian, when at the ſame time executing his commandements without murmuring.

A Maſter that us'd his Slave gently, when his carriage gave him ſome cauſe of diſtruſt, now puts him farre from him, for that a Chriſtian, when hee hath moſt aſſurance of his fidelity. It's committing of a crime to correct the diſorders of a mans life, by the motions of a holy converſion to the Chriſtian faith; and the good which is produced by ſo happy a change, workes not ſo powerfully on the mindes of men, as the hatred they have conceived againſt us. Indeed this hatred is ſtrange; and when I conſider that the name of Chriſtian onely makes it to bee ſo, I would willingly know how a name can bee criminall, and how a ſimple word can bee accuſed? Me thinks a word cannot be condemned, unleſs it be barbarous, or expreſſeth ſome evill ſpeaking, or repre-

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ſents ſome unchaſt thing, and of ill report. The word Chriſtian drawes its originall from that of Unction; it is the name that the ſon of God our maſter tooke, to ſhew he was the King of the faithfull, and the high Prieſt of the new law. And when by an ill pronuntiation you change the ſignification of this name, (for one need but heare you ſpeake it, to diſcover you know it not) it is a name compoſed of ſweetneſſe and goodneſſe; ſo you hate men whoſe actions are full of integrity, and a name that hath nothing of evill in it, did one ever ſee an opinion condemned becauſe of the name of its author? What wonder were it if they that give themſelves to a diſcipline take the name of him that taught it? Are not Philoſophers by the reaſon of the name of their Sects called Platonicks, Epicurians, and Pithagorians? and in conſideration of the places of their aſſemblies Stoicks and Academicks? and doe wee not ſee Phyſitians borrow that of *Eraſiſtratus*? the Gramarians that of Ariſtarchus? and the Cookes alſo that of famous Apicius? Let none thinke it ſtrange that both the one and the other beare the name of their Author, ſeeing they glory in following their Doctrine, and in embracing their diſcipline which was left them. Indeed the name of a Sect cannot bee condemned, if it be not vicious, and it muſt be made knowne that a Doctrine is evill, and alſo that the Author is wicked, to make the name of them odious which make profeſſion of it: for it cannot bee, unleſſe it bee becauſe of the vices of the Sect, and of him that made it. Therefore before you hate our

name, you must know the worthinesse of our Religion by the knowledge of our Author, which is Jesus Christ: or else inquire of the conditions of our master, by a holy search of the things hee taught us. But you will know neither the Religion which you persecute, nor the excellent quality of its Author: You are content to inveigh against the name, and to contend with it: a simple word is all the ground of the injustice you doe to a Religion, and the Author of a Doctrine you know not; and there is so much prejudice in your mindes, that you condemne this law and its Author, onely because of the name, without being convinc't by the force of a lawful conviction.

CHAP. IV.

I Have hitherto insisted in opposing the injustice of the publicke hatred wherewith wee are persecuted: I am now to treat of the point of our innocency; and therefore will not onely refute the things they object against us; but returne the same upon themselves who cast them upon us, that thereby they may know Christians defile not themselvs with crimes so impudently laid to their charge, by those who cannot bee ignorant that Christians are guiltless therof. In regard wherof, I wonder they blush not (wicked people as they are) at the rash accusations they charge us withall; I will not speak against

against good men, but only such as themselves, who aspersе us for criminals.

I will touch in particular all they say wee doe in private, and from whence they take occasion to reproach us as wicked, superstitious persons, worthy the infamy of punishment, and in conclusion objects of laughter and contempt, and make it appeare our Enemies commit the same publickly every day. But because your last refuge, when you see truth on our side discovers all these impostures, is to make use of the authority of the Lawes against us; and have ordinarily *in your mouths*, either that it is not permitted you to examine anew what they have condemned, or your oath injoynes the necessity of obeying the same; that is, whether you will or no, and by constraint you preferre what they will have you, before the knowledge of the truth; I am first obliged seeing the Lawes are under your protection, to speake to you of the obedience due unto them. I say then, when you pronounce these words with too much rigour unto us, *your Religion is forbidden by the Lawes*, and by an inclination contrary to humanity condemn us with an unlimited power, without suffering us to justifie our selves: you act with violence, and exercise a power full of tyranny. Certainly you abuse your authority, when you determine the Christian Religion ought not to be suffered, not indeed because it ought not to be suffered, but because you will not suffer it.

If Justice bee the Rule of your Judgements, and if reason makes you condemne a thing which ought

not to bee condemned; without doubt that onely ſhould be forbid which is wicked, from whence it follows, what is good ſhould bee left to the free liberty of all men. If I finde that to be juſt your Laws forbid, is it not true, this forbidding of yours obligeth me not at all, and contrarily, that I am bound to obey it, if condemning that which is evill? And wonder not if I accuſe your Lawes of errour: it is man hath conceived them, they that made them failed not a little: your Laws have not been eſtabliſhed by the infinite Wiſedome of God.

It is no wonder to take notice, that men may bee deceived in making a Law, and therefore upon better conſideration with themſelves, they have confeſſed their errour, in condemning that they formerly approved? Know wee not that the *Lacedæmonians* ſweetned the ſeverity of *Lycurgus* Lawes, to accommodate them to civill ſociety: at which the great Law-giver was ſo diſpleaſed, that hee voluntarily quitted his Countrey, condemned himſelfe to dye, and to advance his death, deprived himſelfe of nouriſhment for life? and falls it not out every day, that the experience you have got in doing juſtice, ſerves you for a Candle, and glittering light to diſſipate the darkneſs of antiquity, to beat downe before you this thorny Wood of the ancient Lawes? I might ſay, you clear the confuſion that would inſue thereupon, by the authority of the new conſtitutions of the Emperours?

A little while ſince have wee not ſeen *Severus*, a Prince indued with comely gravity and rare wiſ-

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dome to have changed certaine things of the Papie Lawes, although their old age was never so venerable? Lawes that forc'd the People to put their children into the world, before the Age ordained by the *Julian* Lawes to contract mariage, and which shewed them ridiculous, in taking thought with solitary care for the birth of men.

There were also Lawes that permitted Creditors to cut in pieces the bodies of their Debtors, when destitute of meanes to pay what was due to them. But these Lawes are abolished, and the following Ages by a more feeling humanity, have universally condemned this cruelty as too barbarous. They exempted the poor from capital punishment, but not to leave them without chastisement imprinted shame in their foreheads, by ordaining their goods to bee publikly sold, that their infamy might be publick: In like manner, chooſing thereby rather to make bloud ascend into their faces, then to let it out of the bodies of such poore men.

How many other crimes doe you thinke there are in your State, whereof you know not the injustice, and which deserve to be corrected? Surely, seeing equity is the onely object all Lawes ought to propose; Lawes themselves are neither for the number of years or dignity of their Authour; but for the only consideration of the equity and justice that is in them for to bee commended. So that when once wee know they are destitute of this so necessary a condition, we have reason to neglect them, though they have such authority, and condemn those which accuse them of

injustice. But it is not enough to say your Laws are unjust, we must adde they are impertinent, and rash, when they punish men for their Names sake onely, as those are that are published against Christians; if it bee true, Lawes ought to punish actions, if in respect of all other persons they will have the condemnation to be grounded on the proofe of the fact, and not on the name of the accused: Is it not a strange thing that in our Cause they take onely the name we beare to punish us for the crimes they impute unto us? I have committed incest, why require they not my life for the same? I have kill'd a Childe, how comes it to passe, they extort not from mee the confession of these crimes by racks, and tortures? I have offended the Majestie of the gods, and the Prince (say they) why is not my defence heard to know if I have whence withall to justifie my selfe with respect to those crimes they accuse me of? There is no law forbids mee to examine that which is liable to condemnation, neither doth a Judge justly inflict punishment, unlesse he findes the accused to have offended against the publicke ordinances. Neither can a Citizen give the obedience that hee ought to the law, unlesse hee know of what nature the action is which it punisheth. It sufficeth not the law bee good in it selfe; but so it must be knowne also from those from whom it expecteth obedience. For that is to be suspected which will not let us trie whether or no it be just: but without all apparent proofe of its equity will absolutely have what it condemneth to be executed. Such a Law cannot but be wicked.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

But (to say something of the originall of the Lawes you oppose against us) there was an ancient Law that forbad introducing new ceremonies into Religion, as worshipping strange Deities, unless approved by the Senate: this was an inviolable and unalterable Law to which the Prince or Emperour himselfe was subject. *Marcus Æmilius* knew what his power was, when he would have had divine honours rendred to his Idol called the god *Alburnus*, but he could not obtaine the same. A strange thing, and advantagious for our part against you! that the gods with you must depend upon the approbation of men: if men like not God, hee shall no longer be a God; and man must now be propitious to God. It was by vertue of this Law the Emperour *Tiberius* (under whom the name Christian began to be made famous) propounded to the Senate to receive among the number of their gods, Jesus Christ, of whom he heard great miracles had been done, from the intelligence given him by those Commanders under him in *Palestine*, the place where Christ our Master first Preached the mystery of his Divinity.

This Prince witnessed at first, that he enclined to ordaine for him the honour he rendred to his other gods: the Senate rejected the proposition, and would

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not approve of a God they did not know. *Tiberius* remained firme in his resolution, and threatned disgrace to those that went about to accuse the Christians.

Read your ancient Records: you shall finde there *Nero* the first of all the Emperours that persecuted our Religion; when it was in its birth: which much redounded to our glory, that this Monster should be the first of all others that condemned us; for whosoever knew his life, must needs judge it could not otherwise be, but what he condemned was most highly to be esteemed.

Domitian (whose cruelty made up that of *Nero's*) did sometimes resolve also to molest us: but as his thoughts and resolutions were contrary to humane condition, his minde of it selfe turned to render us the peace he had taken from us, and to recall those Christians he had banished. In briefe, we were never persecuted, but by Princes, whose actions were full of injustice, whose minds of impiety, and whose manners of shame and infamy, never persecuted of any but of those whose lives your owne selves are wont to condemn, and whose odious governments oblige you to revoke their judgements, in re-establishing innocents which have beene so miserable as to be the unhappy objects of their fury. Princes who by their vertue got the love of the people, have not been our enemies; and of all the Emperours commanding this State till now, and that had any sense of Piety and Religion towards your gods, or whose conduct was animated by the spirit of humane wisedome

dome, you cannot name one that persecuted the Christians. On the contrary, it will bee found, the Emperour *Marke Aurelius*, a very wise Prince, was our Protector; if you see the Letters hee writ touching the extreame incommodity his Army suffered whilst he made war in *Germany*, you shall finde hee there witnesseth, that the prayers of the Christian Souldiers in his Troops, obtained from Heaven that favourable raine which quenched the thirst wherewith they were oppressed.

This Prince resolving to make acknowledgement of their affection, and the good will they bore him; and yet not purposing to infringe the authority of his Predecessors, did not publickly discharge the Christians from the punishments enacted against them, but rendred their power useles in the sight of all the world, another way, by ordaining their Accusers to be inflicted also with the extreamest punishment. Consider then a little what force these Lawes ought to have, where none made use of them against us, but these Emperours that are defamed with all manner of impietie, injustice, villany, cruelty, lightnes, and folly: which *Trajan* frustrated in part, in forbidding to inquire after Christians, which were never confirmed by an *Adrian*, a Prince curious of all rare and excellent things, by a *Vespasian* who conquered *Judea*, by an *Antoninus Pius*, nor by a *Marcus Aurelius*: If our lives were wicked, as is supposed, we should not feare affliction from wicked Princes, because Companions of their Vices, but rather punnishment to bee inflicted upon us from them who

make profeſſion of honeſty, whom being vertuous we might ſooner feare to become our enemies, and ready upon all occaſions to ſeeke meanes to diſturbe us.

CHAP. VI.

BUT I could wiſh theſe men that appeare ſo religiouſly, and ſo zealouſly obſervant of their owne Lawes, and ſo ſevere defenders of things inſtituted by their Anceſtors, would anſwer to the demands I ſhall make them; namely, whether they have kept their Faith inviolable? whether rendred the honour and obedience they ought to the good Rules left them by their fore-Fathers? whether there are not ſome Laws that have loſt their power and authority among them? whether they have not paſſed beyond the bounds preſcribed by ancient ſimplicity? or rather not baniſhed from their policy all that their Fathers judged neceſſary and convenient to eſtabliſh a good government? what are become of the Laws which cut off Luxury, ſuperfluous and ambitious expences? which commanded what we ſpent at a Feaſt ſhould not exceed five ſhillings? that would have us ſerve up but one Hen at a meale, and that not a fat one neither? which forbad a Senator entrance into the Senate, who had in his houſe twenty markes of ſilver; (as if in that alone one might juſtly ſuſpect he would ſeeme too magnificent) that would

would over throw the Theatres after newly set up, supposing the use of shewes would not serve but to corrupt manners? which would not suffer any man rashly and without punishment to usurp the emblems of great dignities, belonging to persons of noble birth?

But now I see superfluity gives names to Feasts, they call them *Hundreds*, because of so many hundred Crownes spent at such Feasts. They also draw out of the Mines silver to make Basins, not onely for Senators but Free-men, and those that not yet come to obtaine their freedome, yea that scarce exempt from the miseries of servitude: I see it is not enough in open Theatres to content the eyes of the People, but by drawing vast Covertures over, they arme themselves against the injuries of the Ayre, to fulfill their pleasures by the objects of those infamous representations. For they imitate the *Lacedemonians*, who were the first that tooke care to see publique Playes at their ease, and covered themselves with large and heavy Gownes for feare lest during the winter, they should catch cold, in injoying their dishoneſt and unchaste pleasures. I see no difference between the women of honour, and those that are infamous and lewd; they observe not any longer those holy institutions of former times, that injoyned women to have speciall care of modesty and temperance. When a woman wore no more gold then that on the finger she put the Ring her Husband gave her the day shee was married, to bee the gage of her conjugall Faith. When it was so absolutely forbidden

women to drink Wine, that there was one that her neare Kinſman cauſed to be ſtarved, becauſe ſhe had broke the ſeales wherewith his Cellars were ſhut up; and under the reigne of *Romulus* one *Mecenius* killed his Wife for the ſame cauſe, and was abſolved for it.

Therefore it was eſtabliſhed that they ſhould kiſs their Parents, that they might judge by their breath, if they had offended againſt this Law. Where are now thoſe happy Mariages, and good maners, maintained in ſuch a perfect harmony, that we have ſeen neare ſix hundred years ſince the foundation of this City paſs, without hearing ſo much as a divorce once ſpoke of in any one family onely?

Women now a dayes have never a part of their bodies which bows not under the weight of the gold they weare: a man cannot kiſs them without ſmelling the Wine they drinke; and wee are fallen into thoſe times, it ſeems, that people marry onely to be repudiated, and divorce is the fruit of marriage: But this is not all, for as religious as you will appear in the obſervation of the ancient inſtitutions of your Fathers, you have revoked what they ordained with ſerious deliberation concerning the worſhip of your gods. The Conſuls with the Authority of the Senate, baniſhed, not only from the City, but alſo from all *Italy*; Father *Bacchus*, with all ceremonies done in his honour; *Piſo* and *Gabinius* were not Chriſtians, and yet during their Conſulſhip, they forbad to place in the Capitoll, *Serapis*, *Iſis*, *Harpocrates*, and that Image which had the head of a dog,

that

that is to say, they put them away from the Palace of the gods. They tooke from them their divine honours, and caused their Altars to be beat down, that the disorder of vaine and dishonest superstitions might be restrained.

You have re-established all these gods in the dignity they had taken from them, and make them partake of honours due to the highest Majesty knowne by mortals. Tell me where is your Religion? where the reverence you owe to your fore-Fathers? you render your selves unlike them, in your habits, custome of living, manners, opinions, and lastly in your very words & language? you always praise antiquity, and every day receive new things: so that you remove from you as much as is possible, the laudable institutions of your Ancestors, and as for the things that are established, you keep none of them, but what deserve not to be kept. There is moreover, this in it, for I will shew presently that by a negligence, that injureth the authority of your fore-Fathers, although you have set up againe the Altars of *Serapis*, that by your means this god might be no more a stranger at *Rome*, and have presented your sacrifices to *Bacchus*, whom you cause to be worshipped in *Italy*, you have no more this great affection to the worship of the gods, which antiquity held so unfortunate an error, and so strange a blindnes; you your selves destroy the Religion your Fathers taught you, whilest pass for its faithfull protectors, and accuse Christians principally of being guilty of impiety towards them; yet notwithstanding I must justifie our profession

from the infamy of the hidden crimes which they object againſt it, that I may prepare a way, to arrive at the point which concernes the actions we doe in the ſight of all the world.

CHAP. VII.

I Say then, the crimes pretended againſt us, the horror whereof makes us paſs for wicked in the opinion of the people, are, that wee meet together to ſacrifice a childe; after we have taken away his life by a barbarous ſuperſtition, we devoure his body, and when devoured the fleſh of this Innocent, we commit inceſts. They adde, we have Dogs who ſerve to overthrow the Candles, and doing the Office of theſe infamous Merchants of modeſty, make us loſe all ſhame in taking the lights from us, and covering our actions under the vaile of darkneſs, emboldens us to ſeek the uſe of ungodly and ſacrilegious pleaſures.

But ſo it is, we are not guilty, ſave in the diſcourſe you make concerning us. It's a long time ſince you imputed to us all theſe things, and though you accuſe us of them every day, yet you make not much inquiry to know the truth thereof. If you take us to be faulty, why make you not proceſs againſt us as criminals? but ſeeing you have not as yet convicted us by a lawfull proceeding, you ſhould not have ſuch an evill opinion of us; and certainely that which moves

moves you to use dissimulation in what concerns us, tells you wee are unjustly accused. Therefore is it you dare not undertake to informe against us, and when you give the Executioners the order they are to observe in tormenting Christians; you command them to draw from their mouthes, not the confession of what they are, but the disavowing the Religion they profess.

Now (as wee have already said) the doctrine which we follow, began from the time of the Emperour *Tiberius*; from its beginning it hath drawne on it the hatreds of men: it hath met with as many enemies, as it hath found people in the darknes of Idolatry; even those who ought to have received it: The Jewes, to whom it was revealed, are set against it, by a spirit of jealousie, because it would destroy their Law. Soldiers in their usual persecuting us are accustomed to be against it, & our domesticks becoming our adversaries by an evill inclination of nature, have beene the first that made war against it. From thece it coms, that every day we see our selvs besieg'd, we are betrayed at every instant, and very often they take us in our Assemblies. This being so, I ask when did it fall out, that ever any one surprized us at the same time, when a Childe having the knife set to his throat, gave forth his last crye before we cut his winde-pipe asunder? was there any that finding a Christians mouth bleeding, as of the Cyclops, and the Cyrenes after such a deed done by us, presented it to the Judges? Who among you ever discerned in his Wife any symptome or token of unchastity, after

our

our Religion at any time sincerely imbraced by her? Is it possible our Enemies should hide such strange crimes as laid to our charge, after once discovering us to be faulty therein? or that they that take such a pride in persecuting and dragging us before the Tribunall of justice, should be corrupted in our behalfe? you say we doe nothing but in obscurity: if it bee as you say, tell us, when knew you wee did what you accuse us of, and in whose power it was to give you the certaine knowledge of it? it's not likely you had it from the mouthes of them you judge guiltie: for all Mysteries are to be kept secret; and to partake of them as we ought, the Law of silence is faithfully to be observed by us. Men usually say nothing of the mysteries of *Samothracia* or *Eleusina*: How much rather ought they to bee carefull, not to reveale those which would excite against them, were they knowne the rigour both of humane and divine justice.

They are not Christians it seems then, that discover themselves unto you; and if not Christians, then must they be people of different profession, that discourse of their actions. But how should such a peoples knowledge bee informed in those mysteries to be laid open by them, seeing even the ceremonies where piety presides puts away the profane, and suffers no strange witnesses, unless they will have it said, Christians are impious, and the wicked feare lesse to be seen then the good. So you must confess you know nothing of our doings, but by common bruit, uncertain proofe, of the weakeness whereof there

there is no man ignorant? Is there any who knows not the nature of it? One of your Authours said, fame is the swiftest of all evils? why thinke you call they it an evill? is it because of its swiftness? or because its principall office is to discover hidden things? or that it often declareth lies; indeed it hath this evill quality, even when reporting something of truth it cannot forbeare to mingle the same with leasing or falshood. Truth never passeth purely through fames mouth, either she adds something to, or takes something from, or makes some notable change in it: besides, she hath also this fault, her credit lasts no longer then she lies: she hath no life, but so long as she certainly proves nothing: so soon as make evident her proofe, she ceaseth to be any longer Fame, whose property is to make relation of nothing but what's not certainly knowne: so soone s delivered for certaine, the assurance of the thing delivered succeeds immediatly into its place, as being no longer a bruit, but a knowne and profess'd truth. At what time and when such a thing is known, we say not it's so reported, or so the bruit goes, but so or so it is without doubt.

For example, we use to say, such a man hath got such a government, in such a Province, when wee know certainly hee hath got the same: and when not, it is so famed, or so reported. After we are assured of a thing, we make no more reckoning of Fame, which is an expression of doubt and uncertainty. So there are none but fools ground themselves upon reports; wise men believe nothing but what is certain,

and what time alſo hath verified on her behalfe. And certainly, as generall and diffuſed as fame may bee, what beliefe ſoever ſhe hath got with men, and with what aſſurance ſoever they eſteeme her, wee muſt alwayes conſider ſhe had a beginning ſince ſhe hath paſſed through divers tongues and eares, which have given her the vogue ſhee hath in the world. Her originall is ordinarily weake and vicious: but together with all her faults ſhe authoriſeth and covers all that is added to her from her birth, becauſe no body mounts up to the ſourſe, and troubles himſelfe to know whether or no the firſt Author of the relation thereof began with a lie: which falls out often, either through hatred to them fame teares in peeces, or liberty uſurped to make evill judgments upon ſimple ſuſpitions, or the pleaſure ſome take in lying, a pleaſure not new among men, and to which many are ſo naturally inclined. But God be thanked, time reveals the truth of all things; it is a ſentence wee have from you, and whereof wee make uſe againſt you, the eſtabliſhed order of nature cannot ſuffer any thing long to remaine hid: but in the end makes that appear which fame had not diſcovered. Judge then if it be as reaſonable you ſhould ſtill perſecute us ſeeing after ſo long time ther's nothing but bare report to informe you in the knowledge of the crimes we are ſuppoſed to commit, nothing proved againſt us by you, but her teſtimony which is ſo much the more evill, becauſe ſhee cannot yet prove what ſhe hath heeretofore invented to make us appeare odious, and which for ſo many

yeares

yeares ſhee hath affirmed upon the opinion onely of certaine men.

CHAP. VIII.

IT is not enough to ſhew you the weakeneſſe of the proofes you imploy againſt us, I will make knowne our innocence by your own judgement, to overthrow the opinion you have conceived againſt our life: I demand but the teſtimony of nature, who is your mother as well as ours. Suppoſe Chriſtians promiſe Eternall life, as a recompence for all theſe crimes ſo full of horrour: You may believe it if you liſt, but I would alſo know, if after perſwaded by ſuch blacke actions a man might merit Heaven, you would bee ſo barbarous as to deſire it at ſuch a rate. Can it be imagined one ſhould ſay theſe words or the like unto you? come on hither, die your ſword in the bloud of a Child, I ſay in a Childs bloud whoſe tender age ought to have no enemy, who cannot be guilty of injuring any body, and whom every one with a fatherly Love ought to cheriſh.

Or if the charge of ſhedding a Childs bloud bee committed to another, can it be ſuppoſed we ſhould uſe this diſcourſe unto you? Be preſent at the bloody death of an infant who meets with the end of his life in the beginning of his dayes, ſee a ſoule depart out of a body ſo ſoone as it came in, take this blood

newly animated, dip your bread in it, and fill your ſelfe with the ſubſtance thereof. Againe, while at Table, marke well where your Mother, and Siſter, are ſeated, that you may not faile to find them out, after they are left in the darke, by dogs overthrowing the Candles, conſequently extinguiſhing the light. For you muſt know, you cannot but be faulty if you commit not inceſt. If profiting by theſe our inſtructions, you ſquare your Faith by the practiſe of ſuch actions, aſſure your ſelfe you ſhall receive everlaſting life. Anſwer me now, would you to get this never fading felicity do things ſo contrary to all humanity? If nature it ſelfe be of force ſufficient to divert your owne minds from acting ſuch irregular courſes, you cannot I perſwade my ſelfe, be induced to believe that other men would bee faulty therein: Yea though yee certainly believe this the onely way to eternall happineſſe. I dare ſay you would not by ſuch meanes ſo barberouſly defile your ſelves; no neither if you had any ſuch deſire, have the courage to performe the ſame. Judge then of us by your ſelves, and know wee can no more commit theſe crimes then you, or if wee can, your ſelves as liable thereunto as we.

But what do you thinke our judgements different from yours? that Chriſtians of another race of mankind then you are? do you take us for the *Cynocephales*, & *Sciapodes*, Monſters of *India* & *Lybia*? do you believe we are made otherwiſe then other men, that the faculties of our bodies otherwiſe diſpoſed and by a ſavageneſſe more then the moſt brutiſh of all people,

excite us

us onely to feed on blood, and violate the Lawes of nature, in the use of embracements which it forbids? Certainly if believe these things of Christians ther's somwhat in it that you should doe so, we are men as well as you: And therefore if your souls abhor such like actions, you ought not imagine us in regard men as well as Christians, to commit them. You acknowledge these crimes contrary to nature: but you say we deceive them who know us not; as if the calumnies you invented against the Christians were not publicke or any could be ignorant thereof. That which all the world knowes cannot bee dissembled, and those who have embraced the Law of Jesus Christ, take not this resolution, without well considering it: but after all things exactly pondered they finde we are innocent of the crimes wherewith they accuse us. Besides, its a common use, that those who will bee instructed in a Religion, adresse themselves to the cheise Priests, to learne of them what they ought to prepare that pertake of his mysteries. Then if it be true, Christians are guilty of these impieties, there's no doubt but the Priest, whose charge is to receive him who would bee instructed, speakes to him in this manner: Friend, you must be carefull to provide a childe that is yet in the innocence of his first age, who knowes not what death means, and rejoiceth at the sight of the knife that must cut his throat.

You must have a loafe to put under the wound to receive the bloud which runnes from it. You must make provision of Candlesticks and Lamps: You

muſt bring Dogs; which when you throw meat to them to eat out of the reach of the ſtring wherewith tied, the deſire of filling themſelves therewith may excite them to make ſuch a leape, that they overthrow the Candleſticks to which they are tied, and by this means put out the lights: but firſt it is neceſſary you cauſe your Mother and Siſter to be preſent. Yea, but how if they wil not conſent to it? If he hath neither Mother nor Siſter? If no kindred that would be a Chriſtian, can he not be received? and theſe relations of Brother or Son, are they eſſentiall to the qualitie of Chriſtians? I ſay more, ſuppoſe they have all theſe things ready, without advertiſing thoſe who have no knowledge thereof: one cannot denie but they learne preſently what is done in their Aſſemblies; and yet they remain firme, after turning unto Chriſtianity they complaine not of being deceived: but you ſay they feare to be puniſhed, if they diſcover the evill they have done. Contrarily, if any be found that call for the publick Authority againſt Chriſtians as againſt impoſtors, there would be none but would ſpeake in their behalfe. Moreover, if the actions of Chriſtians were ſo deteſtable as you make them, thoſe whom they ſhould ſo abuſe, would rather expoſe themſelves to death then live with the remorſe of ſo criminall a conſcience. But after all, ſuppoſe they feare to accuſe themſelves, how comes it they perſevere ſo conſtantly, and keep their religion in the midſt of perſecutions? for men are not wont to tie themſelves with ſuch conſtancy to a profeſſion, which they had not

not imbraced, if not beene well inform'd of it from the beginning.

CHAP. IX.

BUT, to make it knowne wee are not guilty of these crimes, I will shew, that you your selves in publick & private cómit the same; for it may bee for this reason it is you lay them to our charge. Men heretofore publickly sacrificed Children in *Africa* to *Saturn*, untill the time of *Tiberius*, by whose Commandment, he that governed this Province under him, abolish'd so strange a barbarisme, causing the Priests, the authours of these impieties, to be put to death in their room, on the trees which were near the Temple of this god; trees whereon they were wont to hang the offerings they presented to him, and where the leaves seemed to comply with the crimes committed under their shades.

A just punishment, and which these miserable creatures suffered in the view of the Souldiers, in the Countrey of my Nativity, who served the Lievtenant of the Emperour in the execution of this commission. They still continue these bloudy and detestable sacrifices: but they doe them privately, and hide themselves when they shed the bloud of innocents.

So you see they are not Christians onely that contemne your Lawes: your owne people slight your injunctions:

injunctions: whatsoever severity used by you, you cannot throughly pluck out of mens hearts the roots of this criminall devotion, and your gods change not their manners, in having changed their condition.

Saturn that pardoned not his own children, much lesse would spare children not his owne. Since hee ceased to live upon the earth, hee lost not the desire of bloud he had before. Ever since men made him a god, he continually receiveth the offering up of innocents unto him from the hands of their owne Fathers, who by an unlucky superstition, making sacrifices to their gods, take away the lives of them to whom they had given the same; who voluntarily obliged themselves to this impiety; and who in this action where their owne Children were the victims sacrificed by them, entertained them with flatteries, not without any feeling of compassion, fearing the mystery might be interrupted, if they suffer not their throats to be cut without shedding teares. Tell us a little, whether the crime of murther you impute to us, be not farre beneath that of Paricide, which your People are guilty of? The Gauls offred on the Altars of *Mercury*, men which had attained to their full strength or age of perfection.

I passe by the fables of the horrible sacrifices that were offered up in the Temple of *Diana Taurica*, as matter fitter to be represented on Theatres. There is also in this so religious a City, and Temples of the pious off-spring of *Æneas*, a *Jupiter* in honour of whom they make playes, where they shed humane bloud,

bloud, by Combates with men and wild Beasts. You tell me, you expose none but those that are already condemned to dye. Alas, what then? Is it not the shedding of humane bloud, to shed the bloud of these miserable creatures? But this sacrifice, is it not much more detestable, then the bloud of the wicked which is presented to a God? whatsoever excuse you may seek for, this truth remaines alwayes certaine, that this bloud which you offer, is the bloud of a man, whom you have caused to be cut in pieces, and you cannot accompliſh your vowes without committing murther.

Certainly, your *Jupiter* much resembles *Jesus Christ*: for he thirsts as much for bloud, as you suppose our Master loves to see it shed; and as he is the onely Son of his Father; which you must acknowledge could never bee, had not *Saturne* a cruell heart.

Let us passe now from murthering children in sacrifices, to other kinde of wilfull murthering by their Parents; (for in what manner soever they take away their childrens lives, it is alwayes murthering them, although not alwayes alike hainous:) I will then address my speech to all Idolaters: how many are there among you, O ye people, that are this way greedy of the bloud of Christians? and also among you, O ye Magistrates, that after you appeare such great Justiciers by the severity you treat us with, whose consciences I would strike with true reproaches of having procured the death of your own children? yet if you did but simply put them to death,

it were ſomewhat; but by a ſtrange exceſs of cruelty, you throw them into the water, you expoſe them to the rigour of cold and hunger, and the rage of dogs: you will not take their lives away with the ſword, becauſe too gentle a death, and which men of the age of diſcretion had rather ſuffer, then any other that hath violence in it.

As for us that are Chriſtians, homicide is particularly forbidden us, by vertue whereof, it's likewiſe inhibited us to deſtroy that which the Mother hath conceived in her womb, though yet but bloud, and deliberating (as I may ſo ſpeake) in the preſence of nature, whether or no it take the forme of man: It's a committing murther before hand, to deſtroy that which is to be born; and as much evill in hindring the birth of a foule, as in plucking it out of the body when it is borne: that which ſhould come into the world being a man, and the fruit already in the ſeed which produceth it.

As for that cuſtome, ſo full of inhumanity, to drinke bloud, and to feed on ſuch tragick meats, you may read further in *Herodotus*, it being he, as I think, who reports, that certaine Nations aſſembling to ſweare Treaties, were accuſtomed to draw bloud from their Armes, which preſenting one to the other, they drank ſolemnly.

There paſſed ſome ſuch thing in the conjuration of *Cateline*. They ſay alſo among the *Scythians*, in certaine Families they that are neare alli'd uſe to devoure the bodies of their dead kindred: but wee need not goe ſo far; we have among us the uſe of

theſe

theſe barbarous ceremonies. The Prieſts of *Bellona*, ſhedding their owne bloud, and conſecrating it to their Goddeſs, after putting it in the palme of their hand, give it to thoſe who participate with them in their myſteries. In the publick ſpectacles of the combats of the Gladiators, they that are ſubject to the falling ſickneſs, ſeek their cure by the practice of a Remedy worſe then the Diſeaſe, *viz.* ſeeing the bloud of theſe wretched creatures newly ſlaine; they receive the ſame while running from their wounds, and to obtaine their healths, fill themſelves in ſuch a bruitiſh greedineſs, with the ſubſtance of theſe poore people, who are men as well themſelves.

What ſhall wee ſay of theſe that make whole meals meats of theſe poor creatures (before key-cold) kill'd upon the place of combate, and aske at the ſame time for a piece of the wild Boare, and of the Stag lying dead alſo upon the place? a piece of that wild Boare, which having torn in pieces his aſſailant, whilſt they were yet in the encounter, licked up the bloud flowing from his wounds; againe a piece of that Stag, even yet ſweltring in the gore of the Gladiator whom he pierced with his horne: The people alſo aske for the intrails of Beares, which are full of the bodies of men they have devoured; ſo men fill themſelves with fleſh nouriſhed by that of men. As for you that eat theſe meats, how much are your meales different from the meales of Chriſtians? But what judgement ſhall one give of theſe who by a bruitiſh concupiſcenſe make impure meat for them-

ſelves of that which contributeth to the birth of men? are they leſſe guilty then others, becauſe they devour the ſubſtance of the living? can one ſay in the filth to which they abandon themſelves, there is no humane bloud, becauſe the matter they ſuck in is that wherewith bloud is made? Theſe people eat not onely children, but men, old enough to put other men into the world.

Certainly it muſt needs bee, theſe diſorders with you, ſhould make you bluſh before Chriſtians, who as you know, eat not the blood of any creature, and for that reaſon feed not on the meat of any creatures ſtifled, and abſtaine from that of beaſts which have not been ſlaine, for feare they ſhould have the leaſt bloud that is, even that dri'd up or yet remaining in the fleſh of the ſtrangled beaſt to defile themſelves with.

This is the reaſon alſo, you offer them puddings made with the bloud of beaſts when you trie them, being well informed, that what you ſuppoſe they ſin moſt in, if they accepted thereof, is moſt ſtraitly interdicted them. Is it poſſible, think you, we thirſt after the bloud of men, when you know by experience, we abhorre the bloud even of beaſts? This opinion cannot enter into your mindes, unleſs having taſted of the one and the other both, humane bloud ſeems to you the moſt pleaſing.

But if perſwaded Chriſtians inhumanly devoure this bloud, how comes it to paſs you make not uſe thereof to trie them? you ſhould offer them mans bloud, as uſually you offer them incenſe-fire: They'l

ſoone

ſoon diſcover themſelves in not taking this drinke from your hands, as when refuſe to ſacrifice Incenſe; and thereby you may have this advantage of two ſeverall proofes to condemne them with; namely, their refuſing to taſte mans bloud, and their not offering up Incenſe to your gods.

The criminall juſtice you execute upon ſuppoſed offenders will furniſh you this way with bloud enough to convince all manner of Chriſtians brought before you. But to ſpeak of the crime of Inceſt, who ſhould a man ſooner ſuſpect to be guilty of this wickedneſs, then thoſe to whom the greateſt of their gods (to wit, *Jupiter*) hath given an example? The *Perſians* (as *Creſias* reports) mingle themſelves inceſtuouſly with their owne Mothers. The *Macedonians* it ſeems are not exempt from this ſin, in regard the mocking complaints *Oedipus* makes in the Tragedy of *Sophocles*, becauſe of the Inceſt he had committed with *Jocaſte*, in laughing to ſee him ſo afflicted, they ſaid, goe fight generouſly, and overcome your Mother. As for you, if open but your owne eyes, you cannot but take notice, that Incontinence, whoſe ſlaves you are, nouriſheth you with diſorders, inconſiderately precipitating you into this foule crime: for you expoſe your children to the open aire by putting them from you, that paſſengers having more compaſſion of their hard deſtiny then your ſelves, might bring them up, or elſe make them over to be adopted by other Fathers of a better diſpoſition then your ſelves: Now it cannot be, but in time you loſe the knowledge of your bloud, which you aban-

don to ſtrangers, and when once for want of this knowledge, begin to offend the errour in which you ſo imprudently ingage your ſelves, increaſing by courſe of yeares, your care will perpetuate it ſelfe with the vice of its inceſtuous beginning. And truly your luſt accompanies you in all places where you goe: it remains with you in your houſes: it leaves you not when you travell; it paſſeth Sea with you, from whence it falls out you loſe no opportunity fulfilling your concupiſcence, it's very difficult not to meet in ſome places of the World with perſons that know not your birth, and theirs have the ſame beginning, and that deſcended of the ſame kinred and lineage that you are. It's alſo very hard, leaving your ſeed all the world over, it produceth not children unto you which by the commerce men have one with another, are joyned to you, or yours, by an inceſtuous conjunction, and thereby mingling your bloud with that of your neer kinred, without knowing the ſame.

As for us, the chaſtity whereof wee make exact profeſſion, and which wee keep with greateſt aſſurance, will warrant us from theſe accidents, and as inable us againſt incontinency, by living purely in the eſtate of marriage, preſerve us from falling into the ſin of Inceſt.

Yea, there are many among us, who to avoid theſe diſorders, with greater prevention, vow to God their virginity, which they happily keep till the extremity of old age, that (as it were) renders and renewes unto them the innocency of their firſt yeares.

yeares. Certainly, if consider you your selves guilty of those crimes imputed by you to Christians, you would presently confesse that they are innocent. The light of your owne understanding could not but condemn your selves and acquit them at one and the same instant. But it falls out ordinarily, by the rencounter of a double blindnes, that they who see not that which is, imagine they see that which is not. I will shew you by and by the truth of this proposition in all things, but speake first of those which are more manifest.

CHAP. X.

YOU say we doe not worship the gods, nor for the welfare of the Emperours offer Sacrifices unto them. The one of these two crimes whereof you accuse us, must necessarily follow upon the neck, or in consequence of the other; for being resolved to render no manner of worship to your deities, wee must necessarily bee resolved in like manner, not to sacrifice to their Altars, whether for our selves, or for what person soever it be. Hereupon you conclude us guiltie of sacriledge and high treason, which is the upshot of what you charge us withall: and the argument most convincing of all other, whereof you accuse us. And truly it well deserves to be examined, because the judgement of our innocence wholly depends thereon: the judge-

judgment I say of our guilt or innocence in this matter, that neither prejudice nor injustice pronounce the sentence: not prejudice which upon all occasions refuseth to heare, nor injustice which by all means refuseth to allow of truth when ready to bee alleaged in our defence: We say then, we have desisted from honouring your gods, since the first time we knew them to bee no gods. That which to bee expected by you from us, is, wee prove those you adore as gods, to bee no gods, and therefore unworthy the worship you render them: for it is true, honour should be due unto them, if they were true deities; and Christians were punishable, if this title of a god appertained unto those whom they refuse to adore, for the opinion onely they conceive they are no gods. But you adde, they are your gods: in answer thereunto, we appeale from your words to your Consciences: We are willing they both judge and condemn us, if it can be maintained your gods have not been men as well as your selves; if it be denied, we will convince it of falshood, by the testimony of antiquitie, which shewes us the Cities where they were born, the Countries where they left Monuments of their actions, and places where they were buried.

I will not stay to speake to you of all particularly: there is too great a number of them, new, old, Barbarians, Greeks, Romans, Strangers, Captives, gods that are particularly adored in each Province, those that are knowne in *Greece* and at *Rome*, males, and females, gods of Countries, and gods of Cities, Seafaring and Warfaring gods. It were to lose time

to

to repeat what may bee said of every one of them, I will onely speake of them in grosse, not to make you know them, but to recall your knowledge by remembring their beginning, which it seemes you have forgot.

You have never a god ancienter then *Saturn:* from him begins all that Deity to which you addresse your Vows, at least the principall and the most known: That which you say touching his originall, may fitly enough be applyed to those descended from him. If believe written Books, we shall find that neither *Diodorus Siculus*, nor *Tullus*, nor *Crassus Severus*, nor *Cornelius Nepos*, nor any other ancient Historian, have spoke of *Saturne* otherwise then of a man. If seeke for proofes drawn out of publick Records or monuments, we cannot meet with faithfuller, or more certaine then those we have in *Italy* it selfe, where we learn, that *Saturn* after many Voyages landed in this Province, while comming from *Greece*, and was received there by *Janus* or *Janes* (as the *Saliens* will have it.) The Mountaine where he dwelt was called *Saturnien*: the Citie hee founded carries even untill now, the same appellation, and in conclusion all *Italy* after that of *Ornotrian* was called by his name. It was hee who first found out the invention of Tables and signing or marking money with the image of Princes, from whence it comes, that the publique Treasure is placed by you in his Temple: Now if *Saturn* were a man, hee was the Son of another man; and being his Father was a man, you cannot say he was the Son of Heaven, and Earth.

It is an errour proceeding from hence when *Saturn*, so call'd, that his original was not known, and because they knew not of what race hee was, they easily fell to this beliefe, that he had for his Parents Heaven and Earth, the which a man justly may title the parents of all Mankinde: for who is he that for reverence or honours sake, calls not Heaven and Earth the Father and Mother of us all? or else they had this thought of *Saturn*, namely, that as men are used to say of those they never saw; till comming upon them on a sudden, they are come from Heaven.

So *Saturne* in person thus surprising the Inhabitants of the places where he first landed, passed after for a Divine person, the vulgar calling them Children of the Earth, also whose originall is altogether uncertaine to them. I could tell you people in these times were so grosse, that if a man not wont formerly to bee among them, shewed himselfe to them, they were moved with it in the same manner, as if they had seene a god. Which ought not seem strange, seeing now adaies, the wits of men are so refined, that at present put them in the number of the living gods, who a little before by the Ceremony of a funerall pomp, you knew to bee onely dead men. Enough of *Saturn*, although but a little spoken of him. Wee will shew now that as *Jupiter* the Son of a Man, hee was Man also, as well as his Father, and all the discent of your gods mortall, and of the same condition with those, of whom taking their Birth, they are descended.

CHAP. XI.

BUT because you dare not deny your gods have lived as men, to the end you may justifie the worship given by you unto them; you say, their deities were established unto them after death: let us then examine the causes that should raise men up into this glory.

First, you must grant a greater God then them, a power upon which the power of your gods depends, as of their Soveraign, a god who made those your gods of nothing, by endowing them with a divine nature; for of themselves they could never attaine this qualitie which was not in them, neither is there any but hee who had it of his owne nature, that could give a part thereof to them to whom it did not appertaine originally: That if there were not a God, who gave this divinitie to men: if not, acknowledge this principle Author, it would be but in vaine to think they were made gods after they ceased to live here on the Earth as men. Briefly, had they had the power of making themselves gods, they would never have been born men, and subjected themselves to mortality, while injoy they might the possession of a far more excellent condition.

Then if there bee a chiefe God that makes gods, I returne to the search of the causes which should oblige him, being the chiefest, to communicate to men

this high Majestie: and I finde none unless wee say this chiefe God had need of their ministry wherewith to exercise his functions more perfectly: But it's an injuring the Authour of all things, to thinke he needed the help of any one living, much lesse should imploy to so excellent an end the ministry of dead men. This wise providence could not but well foresee such an assistance would be necessary to him for the time to come, and in this foreknowledge it had been more convenient for him to make gods assistant to himselfe from the very beginning, then stay the end of these mens lives subjected to mortalitie, whom he purposed to make his fellow gods.

But I see no need God Almighty had to make other gods; for what manner of thought soever wee have of this world, whether it had no beginning and was never made, (according to the opinion of *Pythagoras*) or that there was a time when it had a beginning, & was made, (according to the opinion of *Plato*) the eternall Wisdome at the same instant doubtless when he formed it, foresaw by an absolute & admirable exquisiteness all that was necessary for the government thereof; he who gives perfection to all other things, could not be imperfect to himselfe, as expecting help from *Saturn*, or any other of *Saturns* race to adde to his perfection.

Men would be thought to be very simple if from the beginning of time they believed not both raine to have fallen from the Clouds, starrs to have darted out their beames from Heaven, light to have shone, Thunder to have made a noise, and *Jupiter* himselfe

to

to have trembled (as it were) at the terrible roaring of Thunderbolts put by God into his hands. Also the Earth produced all sorts of fruits before *Bacchus*; *Ceres* and *Minerva* lived, yea before those whom you make your greatest Gods raigned upon the Earth. That which serves to entertaine the life of man is as ancient as himselfe, providence giving him a being, I gave him at the same time all things whereof hee stood in need; and men could not have invented any thing more for their preservation, then what was before: let them not say therefore they are the Authors; but onely after finding out the same, when created before by God that taught others how they should make use thereof, which presupposeth such things were before such, as they shewed their use. And from thence followes the glory or honour thereof is not to be attributed to men, but to him to whom they themselves owe their originall. If *Bacchus* were put in the number of the Gods because hee first taught men to plant the Vine, certainly they have ill treated *Tantallus* in not making him a god also, he being the first who planted Cherry-trees in *Italy*, brought by him from the Kingdom of *Pontus*; for they ought also to have made him a god, as Author of a new fruit, because he first gave them knowledge of it. Wherefore seeing from the beginning all, wee see done in the Universe, hath beene done before, as likewise all things ordayned to certaine functions of their nature, this first reason for which suppose God communicated his deity to men is rendred of no force, because the same faculties

ties you give to each of your Gods inventing, were from the beginning of the world created by God, and should never have seased to bee, or to produce their excellent effects, though you had never established those your gods. Seeke yee therefore another reason for mens being sacrificed unto, as unto gods, by saying that deifying them is the reward of their eminent vertues. From whence I suppose you must grant that this God that makes other Gods, governs by the rules of exact justice, and distributes not so noble a recompence rashly, without measuring his liberallity, and considering the merit of those whom he calls to his glory. I will therefore examine these mens actions whom you now adore as gods, to see if they be of a condition that render them worthy to bee lifted up to Heaven, or not rather (which as a man would thinke) should have cast them headlong into the bottome of Hell, a Prison (as you say somtimes) wherein the wicked are shut up, to receive the punishment of their crimes. A place where (according to your opinion) those are imprisoned who have banished from their hearts the naturall Piety that Children ought to shew towards their Parents; a place whither those are confined who commit incests with their sisters, who corrupt married women, ravish Mayds, defile themselves with boyes, use all manner of violence or outrage, kill, steale, and deceive their neighboures, and who (to shut up all in a word) by their vices, are like some of your gods; for you cannot make appeare one of them was ever exempted from all manner of faults, unlesse de-

ny him to bee at any time man. But you must acknowledge, your gods have been of the condition of men, because the actions you attribute to them witnesseth they were subject to such disorders, as are tokens of the weakness of our nature, and tokens I say which permit not, wee can be perswaded that after death they should be stiled gods.

In a word, if wont to punish those who suffer themselves to be carried away with these disorders; if as many of you as are people of any good manners, avoid the commerce, conversation, and societie of vicious and infamous persons, thinke you, God hath called you to possession of his Deitie those whom they resemble? or if any such matter believed by you, how comes it to pass you condemn criminals? you that adore the companions of their crimes? the justice you seem to exercise in this world, serves not in heaven but for a subject of mockery, and derision. If render your selves conformable to your gods, you must ascribe divine honours to the wickedst of all men, it being an honour to those gods you adore, to make gods of men most like unto them in all maner of abhominable filthiness.

But to omit speaking any further of things so unworthy of divine worship, I could wish so long as they lived here below, they had been of better report, had passed their dayes here in perfect integrity. How many nevertheless of better reputation then these whom you worship for gods, have you left in Hell? have you not there put *Socrates* so renowned for his wisdome? Also *Aristides*, no less famous to

all

all posteritie for his justice? *Themistocles*, who was so excellent a Souldier? *Alexander*, who by his high enterprizes made himself so great and terrible? *Policrates*, who was so happy? *Crœsus* who possessed so much riches? and *Demosthenes* whose eloquence was so admirable? Were there any of your gods wiser then *Cato*? juster, or more warlike then *Scipio*? greater then *Pompey*? happier then *Sylla*? richer then *Crassus*? and eloquenter then *Cicero*? Certainly, God who knowes perfectly the merit of men, being to have his divine nature, communicated to mortall men, would have thought his graces with more equitie distributed if hee had stayed for the death of these persons to make gods of them.

But it may be he made too much haste, and thereupon after he had taken the men whom you adore, to be partakers with him of his divine Majesty, shuting up Heavens doores, could not call thither any other, these faire souls in the mean while going down to Hell; where murmuring against his injustice, by their complaints, from thence they make him still blush with shame, enough unto this day.

CHAP. XII.

NOT insisting on these things any longer, I will shew you the true condition of your gods, and thereby demonstratively make it appeare that indeed they were never gods. Touching

ing whom to say what I have heard and read, I find nothing at all but the names of certaine men long since dead, fabulous reports of what they did in their life time, and thereof composed mysteries made sacred to mock the common-people withall. As for the Images you adore, that which seems to me most ridiculous, is, they are made of the same matter that other Vessels, wherewith you are ordinarily served: Or rather of your moveable goods you make gods, by your consecrating them, and thereby changing the uses whereunto at first ordained by the help of Art; also you give them another form, then what they had, and of the matter thereof compose figures which you call gods: which workes cannot without much abuse and wronging the Divine Nature be done by you.

From whence nevertheless we that are Christians may take occasion of comforting our selves with respect to those evills your gods cause us to suffer, seeing the same you make them endure before obtaine from you the titles of gods. So wheras you tye Christians to Crosses and peeces of wood; have you any image that in making thereof hath not been first fixed to such like stakes before compleated into such a shape, as thought fit by you to be worshipped in? you hang us up as publick spectacles unto all men upon Gibbets. Is it not on a Gibbet that the Masse or body of those things you call gods is set up before worshipped by you? You pearce our bodies with irons, and when forming your gods of wood, use you not the like violence with Sawes, Chissels,

and ſuch like iron inſtruments upon each member of them alſo? You cut off our heads, and your gods have no heads till after faſtened by you to their bodies, with Soder, Ciment, and Iron Cramps.

You expoſe us to the rage of wild beaſts, and are they not ſuch beaſts you make to keepe company with, *Bacchus*, *Cybele* and *Ceres*, men carving or painting them therewith? You throw us into the flames, and have not your gods beene tryed therewith when of a ſhapeleſſe matter, the Smiths hand formed them into a Comelier figure out of the fire? you condemn us to worke in mines, and is it not from thence your Gods made of ſilver and gold fetch their originall? you confine us to Iſlands, and have not ſome of your gods taken their birth, and others their death there? If any divinity in theſe things, it will follow, men conſecrate theſe they puniſh, and that puniſhments are imbraced inſtead of gods. But in truth your gods neither know the outrages men do unto them, when they work upon their Statues, nor the honours they render them when adore and preſent ſacrifices to them.

Moſt vile and prophane Wretches, that ſpeak after this ſort, that dare utter ſuch blaſphemous words (ſay you of us) in reproach of our gods, bee as angry and fume with rage as long as you liſt, what ever ſay, you are they that have approved the workes of *Seneca*, though inveighing more eagerly though penn'd with much more vehemence againſt this your ſuperſtition. Then if wee doe not adore Statues and Figures, which are as cold as the dead bodies they re-

preſent,

preſent, and whereof the beaſts know their inſenſibility; our reſolution that proceeds but from the light of truth, which coming to inlighten our minds, makes us renounce your errour. Is it not worthy rather of praiſes, then of the torments wee ſuffer? Is it poſſible we can offend them whom wee know very well that they are not? That which is not, ſuffereth no manner of injury from any body, becauſe it is not.

CHAP. XIII.

BUT you ſay the gods we offend are your gods; if it be ſo, from whence comes it, that by your actions you ſhew your ſelves impious and ſacrilegious towards them. I will maintaine it you undervalue thoſe whom you take to bee your gods, you overthrow their Altars at the ſame time you are thought to reverence them, and detract from the glory thereof when you would appeare to be ſo zealous. Examine what follows, and ſee whether I ſay the truth.

Is it not ſo that ſome among you adore certaine gods which others adore not? you cannot deny but you wrong thoſe gods whom you render no honour to: the preferring of ſome gods neceſſarily implieth the neglect of others, becauſe when of two things we chuſe one, it's certaine we reject that we chuſe not

and consequently neglect the same. So you despise the gods you know not, and testifie you feare not to offend them, in denying them the worship wherewith you honour other Deities.

But (as we have touched upon before) the condition of each of your gods, depends upon the approbation of men. Hee is not a god whom your Senate, while not approving of, refuseth to owne as God.

As for your domestick gods (stiled of you by the names of Lares) you dispose of them even as of your other houshold or domestick goods, pawning, selling, and changing them upon all occasions, as your selvs list: of a *Saturne*, and *Minerva* you make goods for your Kitchin, when these Images are spoyled and broke with old age, in having too long time received divine honors: or else if you find your selves incommodated in your affaires, you make money of them to help the necessity wherwith you are pressed, in which you finde more holiness, then in your gods, seeing you preferre it before the worship you render them.

You use the gods of the publick no better, then those private Lares made use of. You imploy the authority of justice to prostitute them; you put them into the Book of the publique revenew, and let them out to those that offer most for them, even as you are wont to farme those incomes that are raised in the Capitol and Market. A Crier publisheth the prices of a Deitie, and in pronouncing what you judge it to bee worth doth it solemnly, and in the same

ſame forme as all other things prized by you; a Treaſurer keeps Regiſters of the price of the Farme of a god, as of the price of all other farmes. It ſeems Land charged with tribute is of leſſe value, then Land not ſubject to any duty; a man that is impoſed to a perſonall tax, is not noble, as a man that is exempted from it; for theſe charges are markes of ſervitude.

Contrarily, among the gods thoſe which pay a greater tribute are not moſt to be adored, but rather thoſe to whom men have the moſt devotion, render a greater tribute then others. They make a ſhamefull commerce of the Majeſty of the gods: they carry their Images even into Ale-houſes, that Religion may beg an Alms there: they take money for their entrance into the Temple, & for the place they occupy there: one cannot make uſe of the gods freely, and their myſteries are not exempted from ſale alſo. But what doe you in honouring them, you doe not alſo practice in celebrating the memory of dead men? you erect Temples and Altars both to the one, and the other, their Statues have the ſame Ornaments; You dreſs up thoſe for men according to the diverſitie of their age and condition: you obſerve the ſame thing of the gods.

What difference is there between the Feaſt made in honour of *Jupiter*, and Feaſts of the Funerals of the dead? between the Veſſels out of which they powre Wine in ſacrifices, and thoſe they uſually offer to the ſhades of the dead? between the *Augure*, and he that hath the charge of the Graves? For hee doth

the Office of an *Augure*, in Funerall Ceremonies, yet we muſt acknowledge you juſtly place your Emperours after dead in the number of the gods, ſeeing whileſt they lived you conferred this honour upon them. Your gods are obliged to you, and they ought to thank you, becauſe of their Maſters you make them their equalls: But whereas you attribute divine honour unto *Larentina* a Common Whore, I would rather adviſe you to worſhip among your *Juno's*, *Ceres*, and *Diana's*: *Laïs* or *Phryne* after the ſame manner. You erect a Statue to *Simon Magus*, with this Inſcription, This is the Statue of a Deity. You make a Deity of I know not whom, of one that hath been bred with infamous education, and proſtrated to the lewdeſt pleaſures, even thoſe which Nature her ſelfe abhorres; albeit your gods of old (being of the ſame ſtamp) were no better then ſuch, yet they take themſelves nevertheleſs to be fouly reproached by you when uſing libertie to worſhip the aforeſaid men and women with what ever divine rites your ſelves liſt, you give the ſame honour to others of later edition, which was wont anciently to be aſcribed onely unto themſelves.

CHAP. XIV.

I Will now ſay ſomthing of the rites and ceremonies of your Religion; not inſiſting much on the condition of your ſacrifices, where the beaſts you offer

offer are the oldest and worst you can find: when your sacrifices are fat and well fed you keep the best of them; and offer to your gods, onely unprofitable peeces cut off from severall parts, and accustomed to be given by you in your houses, to servants or dogs. Even as of the tenth part of your goods vowed by you to *Hercules*, you present him but with a third on his Alters.

Imagine not that I blame you at all for this, contrarily its an action of wisdome mee thinkes to keep part of what would be intirely lost. But that which I thinke strange is this, the Bookes wherein instructed in worldly prudence, and from whence you draw the knowledge of all duties touching a civill life, are they not filled with impertinent and ridiculous tales concerning your Gods. In those bookes its reported that the gods have sought one with another, as the *Gladiators* in favour of the *Trojans* or *Greekes*: that *Venus* was hurt with the shaft of an Arrow, drawne by the hand of a man, when she would have pulled her son *Æneas* from *Diomedes* who had almost kil'd her. That *Mars* remained thirty months in irons wherewith chained. That *Jupiter* by the help of a certaine monster was saved from the same violence the other gods would have made him suffer.

Sometimes they present him shedding teares for the death of *Sarpedon*, sometimes they figure him in the infamous embraces of his sister, telling him of his adventures and assuring him that the love hee bore towards his mistresses was not comparable to

that

that of theirs to him. After all, who is hee among your Poets, to flatter ſome Prince, invents not ſome unworthy thing of your gods? One will have *Apollo* employed in feeding the cattle of King *Admetus*; Another ſpeakes of *Neptune* as of a Mercenary, recommended to *Laomedon* to build the City of *Troy*. There is a Lyrike Poet (*Pindarus* by name) who writes that *Æſculapius* was ſtrucke with thunder, for abuſing his knowledge of Phyſicke, by covetouſly making uſe thereof, to hurt rather then reſtore men unto their healths; wherein *Jupiter* was too blame, if *Jupiter* it be that hath command of the Thunderbolts, for ſhewing ſuch cruelty towards his granchild, ſuch envy towards the Author of ſo excellent and uſefull a ſcience. But truly theſe things are of ſuch a condition that men who would bee thought Religious ſhould neither relate them if they were not true, nor invent them if they were falſe. *Tragicke* and *Comicke* Poets are not more reſpectfull of your gods: in regard that uſually, when making mention of them in their interludes they ſpare not to ſpeake of their diſorders. I will ſay nothing of your Philoſophers. *Socrates* may ſuffice for all, who in deriſion to your falſe Gods, calls an Oak, a Buck, and a Dog, for witneſſes of the oathes hee made. But *Socrates* ſay you was condemned, becauſe hee undervallued, and conſequently put a blurre upon the worſhip of your gods. I anſwer, truth hath beene in all times the object of the hatred of men. Yet the *Athenians* repented of the judgement they gave againſt him: they puniſhed thoſe that accuſed him, and placed in

their

their Temples his Statues made of the most precious of all their metals. Now seeing they revoked his condemnation, without doubt they gave Testimonies of his innocence, and approved the opinion hee had of the gods. But your *Diagoras* hath he not scoffed sufficiently at *Hercules*? and *Varro* the Cynique of the Romans, bringeth he not in three hundred gods without a head under the name of *Jupiter*?

CHAP. XV.

ALL these Libertines who labour so much to delight you, draw their subject from dishonest action attributed to your gods. When you see them play the Baffoones with ridiculous conceits out of *Lentulus*, and *Hostilius*, tell me whether they be your jesters, or your gods that stir up laughter: there you heare an immodest *Anubis* spoken of a masculine Mooney, and a *Diana* that was whipt, there the will of a dead *Jupiter*, is redired there jests made of three hundred starved *Hercules*. Besides all this, Comedies Tragedies expresse all that is shamefull in the History of your gods.

There with delight you may heare the Sun complain of the misfortun of his off-spring thrown down from Heaven. You may see there, without blushing, *Cybele* sighing for a Shepheard that undervalued her: there you suffer to be repeated in songs before you, all the Encomions wherewith *Jupiter* is extolled for

his lewd pranks, and how *Paris* decided the difference betweene *Iuno*, *Minerva*, and *Venus*. But are they not certaine infamous persons that are disguised with the visages of your gods? Is it not some vicious fellow that appeares on the Stage with a forced posture, and an effeminate voice to represent a *Minerva*, or *Hercules* unto you?

Tell me, if in approving these sacrilegious persons by the commendations and applaudings you give them, you violate not the Majesty of your gods, and prophane their Deities? But it may be whats repeated on the Amphitheatre hath more modesty and piety in it. It is there where your gods play their parts in the bloud of men, and horrour of punishments. Their Histories serve for an argument to the subjects which the guilty present there; and very often also these poore people doe truly represent the personages of your gods, by the paines they indure. Wee have sometimes seen the secret parts of a miserable creature cut off for your god. *Attis* of the City of *Pessus*; and sometimes he that wore the habit of *Hercules* lost his life for him in the flames. We have taken occasion to laugh, to see *Mercury* in the midst of the bloudy Spectacles, of the combats of the Gladiators, which are acted at Noone, proving the dead bodies with his hot iron rod, to try if they be still living. And *Pluto* conducts them with a hammer in his hand, to dispatch them, if not already dead.

If all these actions and many such like, which one might finde out, bee injurious to the honour of your gods,

gods, and throws all their Majesty to the ground, they must take it from the neglect which they have of their Deities, and of those that commit it, and are the cause thereof.

But suppose all this is but jesting: There are other things which your consciences cannot disavow, no more then that I have already said; you make bargains for Adulteries in the Temples: you corrupt the chastitie of women before the Altars: you fulfill your concupiscences for the most part even in those houses which ordained for the Priests, and for the laying up of other holy things therin, having before your eyes the Pontificall habits, and the Incense still fuming with the fire of the Sacrifices. This being so, I know not why your gods doe not more complaine of you, then of Christians: Indeed, all these are found guiltie of sacrilege are of your Religion: for (as you know) Christians never enter, in the day time, into your Temples; it may be they would ransack them as well as you, if they offered sacrifices, as you doe.

But if you aske what Deity the Christians adore? I answer, it is not hard to conceive, that they who render no worship to false gods, honour the true; they will not fall any more into the errours from whence they are delivered, when as they have received the light of the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, and known the wickednes of Idolatry. Now I will begin to discover the mysteries of our Religion, yet it shall be after I have refuted the false opinions you have conceived of it.

CHAP. XVI.

SOme among you have fancied the god we worship hath the shape of an Asse. It importeth that I discover the original source of this fable. The reason that raised this suspition of me, is in the fifth Booke of the History of *Cornelius Tacitus*, where making mention of the warre that *Titus* had with the Jewes under the Empire of *Vespasian*, he takes occasion to relate the History of this Nation, speaking as he thinks good, of its originall, name, and Religion; and reports that the Jewes comming out of Ægypt, where they were banished, as he believes, received great incommodities in passing the vast Desarts of *Arabia*, because they found no water, and as they were extreamly prest with thirst, they were delivered by the rencounter which they had with a company of wild Asses, who shewed them the Fountains where they went to drink, lying not farre from their Pastures. And in acknowledgement of this benefit, they are reported to consecrate the image of one of these Asses that then succoured them in that extremity.

I think on this tale makes it presumed that the Christians whose Religion is drawne from that of the Jews, and hath succeeded it, worship the effigies of an asse. Yet the same Author, who saith hee lies not, writes nevertheless that *Pompey* having taken

ken the City of Jerusalem, and entring into the Temple to see the mysteries of the Jewish Religion, saw there no image at all. It is likely, had they formed any image to the Deity adored by them, they had reposed it in the Sanctuary, where if suspected to bee thought Idolaters, they could not bee discovered by strangers, because none but their own high Priest permitted to enter in, a vaile also being drawn before it, to hinder all others from prying thereinto.

As for your selves its a thing you cannot deny you worship with ridiculous ceremonie, all beasts of burthen with their goddesse *Hyppone*. But peradventure it may not bee so well taken, that among so many worshippers of all sorts of creatures, we onely should be thought to adore nothing else but asses. I come therefore to those who are of opinion wee worship a crosse also, and do not they the same thing they believe of us, when they consecrate their woodden images. It imports not though it bee another figure, so it bee of the same matter; though the forme bee not the same, so it be the body of a God.

What difference is there betweene the wood of the crosse, and an Athenian Pallace, or a *Pharian Cares*, which are nothing but rough pieces of wood unshapt, whereof the hand of the workman hath not formed an image? All images set upon their feet by you represent a part of the crosse; and do not we better then you, when wee worship the whole Godhead in Christ without a Crosse. Moreover, those taken by you for gods have been in the beginning call'd, as we said

ſaid before in moulds made after the forme in ſom part or ſimilitude of a croſſe: beſides you conſecrate ſpoyles taken by you from your enemies: you rayſe up Trophies in honour of victory: and thoſe Trophies what are they within but onely trees made by you into croſſes? The Roman ſouldiers in their Religion which is all martiall, adore the enſignes of their Emperour, they ſweare by their ſtandard, and make Deities of them, which they preſer before the majeſty of their other gods. Which Enſignes and ſtandards of theirs, however richly ſet forth, however cover'd over with cloth of gold, perhaps, or tiſſue, and the like, are all for the moſt part repreſented to the eyes under the forme or figure of a Croſſe. So that all the difference I finde between the Croſſe we honour, and you, conſiſts, it ſhould ſeem, in the pompouſneſs wherewith yours beyond ours is adorn'd. Wherein I applaud you for it, that you conſecrate not bare croſſes without all other manner of adorning them.

There are, that with more apparent reaſon believe, the Sun to be our god, theſe ſend us to the Religion of the *Perſians*: But wee worſhip not the Image of the Sun, as theſe people doe, who in a fooliſh ſuperſtition carry it ordinarily painted on their Bucklers. Yet herein they ſuſpect us for ſo doing, becauſe hearing when we pray, wee turne our ſelves to the Eaſt: Is it not true, there are many among you that doe the ſame, when making Oriſons to ſome other gods then thoſe Images of yours repreſent, proſtrate themſelves to the Sun-riſing, and in that

that posture offer up their vows to Heaven? It celebrate the Sunday, which is the day of the Sun, as a Holyday, to rejoice in it, so doing we worship not that great light of the world, but thereby rather solemnize this day which comes next after that of *Saturne*, to be distinguished from the Jewes, who owne Saturday for their Sabbath, and with respect thereunto spend the same in all manner of ease and idleness, swerving in so doing from the laudable custome of their Ancestors, long since extinguished with them.

The calumnies invented to cry down our Religion, arise to such excesse of impiety, that not long agoe in this City, a Picture of our God was shewed by a certain infamous person that got his living by exposing to the sight of the people, wilde beasts: who by a strange faculty gotten by him to avoid their bitings, making use of his craft, shewed also the aforesaid Picture openly to all commers, with this inscription thereon, *This is* Onochoetes *the god of the Christians.*

This supposed god of the *Christians* pretended by him, had the ears of an asse, a hoof on one of his feet, carried a book, and was clothed with a gowne. We laugh at the barbarousnes of this name, and the extravagancy of this figure. But they me thinks, should rather worship such a Monster as this for a god, who for the present adore with divine honour such like things: for example, an Image composed of two different formes at the same time, having the head of a Dog, and Lion, joyned together; hornes resembling

those

those of an Oxe and Ramme, like a goat from the loines, a serpent from the thighs, with wings on his feet and backe. Of these things more then enough, that nothing remaines to bee confuted on our part, of what ever falsly alleadged by the Heathen against us, as also that you might not say or impute to mee I have used artifice in dissembling the things whereof I could not justifie the Christians. I come now to the expounding the mysteries of our Religion.

CHAP. XVII.

THe God whom we worship, is one only God, who created of nothing this great masse of the world, together with every thing whereof the Elements, bodies, and spirits therein are composed, and by the authority of his word, by the admirable order which his wisdom hath established, and the vertue of his infinite power, hath produced this excellent worke to bee a worthy image of his greatnesse: from whence it comes the Greekes have given him a name which signifies ornament. This God though dayly to be seene, is nevertheless invisible; though graciously represented every where, incomprehensible; enough expos'd to humane sence, yet indiscernable. Because such a God, therefore is hee the true God. Ordinarily that which fals under the object of the sight, which may bee handled, which the mind can understand, is lesse then the eyes that

se

see it, the hands that touch it, the mind which make it be known. Which things cannot be said of God whose infiniteneſſe is onely indiſcoverable save to himſelfe. In regard whereof though not so well apprehended of men, yet is he nevertheleſſe not altogether unknowne to them. Somthing of him men conceave, when conceave him to be beyond the farthest reach of all humain reasonings, his immensity at the same time diſcovering, when concealing. But heerein you miſtake principally in that you will not know him at all, becauſe you cannot know him perfectly, or you will not worship him becauſe you will not know him, when at the inſtant you seem to avow as much, you cannot be wholly ignorant of him.

Well then, will you have us prove him by the infiniteneſſe of his marvellous workes wherewith wee are encompaſſed, wherewith wee are preſerved, wherwith we are delighted, wherwith we are terrified? Wil you have us convince you of your infidelity by the witneſs of your owne ſoule? you know in deſpite of the conſtraint shee ſuffers in the Priſon of her body, in the midſt of evill habits wherwith beſieged, with reſpect to the diſorders of vicious inclinations, and unchaſt deſires impairing her vigor, in this misfortune of her condition, where she ſees her ſelfe enſlaved to falſe deities, when retire into her ſelfe, and takes up her ſpirits, as it falls out after shee comes from being cropſick (as it were) out of ſleep, or whatever diſtempers if retaining ſtil the uſe of reaſon, she thanks God. This inward motion that makes you call on God, doth it not ſhew you that there is but

one God to whom truly this high title belongs? Is it not true that you all say God is great, God is good? and when you speake of the good you receive from Heaven that God hath given, do you not also make this, God your judge, when you say God sees all things, recommending your selves to God, and desiring that hee will help you? in effect, these words which you have ordinarily in your mouth shew, that your soules are naturally carried to acknowledge a God, and consequently that you are Christians. Finally, he that speaks thus of God, looks up to Heaven, and not to the Capitoll, for hee knows Heaven is the residence of the living God, as he knows him to bee the Author of his life, and from thence to have descended.

CHAP. XVIII.

NOw as God is full of goodnesse, hee would leave a means, whereby men might acquire a full and intire knowledge of the truth of his being, his lawes, and his commandements. He hath given the Holy Scriptures to instruct those who will bee enlightened with the light of the true Religion, who desire to finde it when they seeke it, who have intentions to believe in the word of one God, after they have found him, and to serve him faithfully after they have received the same. Therefore he caused men to bee sent upon the earth from the beginning

ning of times, who by holinesse of manners, and innocency of their lives, have rendred themselves capable of knowing and shewing his greatnesse to others. He hath abundantly shed upon them the graces of his divine spirit, that they might preach, there is but one God who created this Universe; who is the true *Prometheus* that tooke man from the earth, who hath ordained in the world the change of seasons, by which it subsists; who hath given tokens of the dreadfull rigor of his judgements by water, and fire, who hath published his Lawes wherein all hee would have men doe to please him are set downe, Lawes that you are ignorant of, or neglect; who hath ordained great recompences to those that keepe them, who, at the end of the world, will rayse all the dead, that ever lived from the Creation of the World, commanding them to reassume their bodies, to examine their good or evill actions, that thereupon gives to the faithfull a felicity that hath no end, and condemne Idolaters and such like to eternall flames. We have heertofore been of your opinion, and then mocke at this doctrine, for men are not borne Christians; they embrace this Religion after they know it. Wee say then, those to whom God hath given this charge to preach, are called Prophets, because they publish the things which should come to passe: the oracles which they have declared, concerning the mysteries of that God which we worship, have been layd up in bookes, as in the publicke treasury, where they have been kept till now.

The most learned of the *Ptolomies*, who was sirnamed *Philadelphus*, a most accomplished Prince in the knowledge of learning, would after the example of *Pisistratus* make a rich Library, among the excellent peeces which hee sought after, and had reputation, either because of their antiquity, or because they were rare and curious, by the advice of *Demetrius Phalereus*, (who was then the learnedst of all the Grammarians, and to whom he had given the keeping of all that great number of volumes hee had gathered together,) aske of the Jews the holy bookes which were written in their mother tongue, & which were not found any where else but in their hands: For the Prophets were alwayes of their nation, and they alwayes addressed their Prophesies to them; as to a people, who by the merit of their ancient Patriarks, had the happinesse to bee the beloved of God. We called them heeretofore Hebrews, whom you now call Jews, and therefore their language was called the Hebrew tongue. The Jews to make knowne to strangers the law of the true God, granted *Ptolemy* that which he desired of them, and sent him seventy two learned men to interpret those holy bookes. Will you have witnesses? the Philosopher *Menedemus* who was a powerfull Protector of the opinion of divine providence, admired at what recorded in them, and in that point was of the same opinion with them. *Aristeus* hath left a publicke monument of this history, in a booke hee composed in Greeke: These Hebrew volumes are found at this day in the library of *Ptolemy*, and the Jews read them openly,

you

you may goe and heare them every Saturday in their Synagogues; they buy this liberty with a great tribute which they annually pay.

He that heares the truths they declare, shall meet with the truth of one onely God; and whosoever will study to comprehend the mysteries contained in the Holy Scriptures, will bee presently forced to believe them.

CHAP. XIX.

THese holy Writings take their principall authority from their antiquity. You are wont to make use of this proofe, and will have it to be lawfull in upholding your Idolatry, you ground the reverence you carry to your gods, on long continuance of years, but wee have more reason to make use of it then you; for the books of one of our Prophets onely, to wit, *Moses*, (wherein, it seemes, God hath inclosed, as in a treasure, all the Religion of the Jewes, and consequently all the Christian Religion, preceding for many ages together) reacheth beyond the ancientest you have, even all your publick Monuments, the antiquity of your originals, the establishment of your estate, the birth of most part of the people, the foundation of many great Cities, all that most advanced by you in all ages of History, and memory of times, the invention of Characters which are interpreters of Sciences, and the Guardians of all excellent

excellent things: I thinke wee may say more, even your gods, Temples, Oracles, and Sacrifices.

Have you heard mention made of that great Prophet *Moses*? He was contemporary with *Inachus*, he preceded *Danaus* three hundred fourscore and thirteen years, the ancientest of all that have a name in your Histories: He lived about a thousand years before the ruine of the City of *Troy*; I could also say, fifteen hundred and more before *Homer*: for it is not without ground, neither will I relate it, but as others have reported it before me. Every of the other Prophets succeeded *Moses*, and yet the last of them, all, is of the same age as your first Wise-men, Lawgivers, and Historians were.

The proof of these things are not so difficult, as it would be troublesome, so hard as long to make apparent: wee must examine a great number of Volumes, and Papers, put our selves to calculate the sequell of times, open the Records of the ancientest of all people, namely, of *Egyptians*, *Caldeans*, and *Phœnicians*: make use of the testimonies of their Writers, who have left to posterity the knowledge of things past; of *Manethon* an *Egyptian*, *Berosus* a *Chaldean*, *Hieromes* a *Phœnician* King of *Tyre*, and of them that followed after, *Mendesius* a *Ptolemean*, *Menander* an *Ephesian*, *Demetrius* a *Phalerian*, King *Juba*, *Apion*, *Thallus*, and *Josephus*, the genuine and true Author of the antiquity of the Jews, whose Writings either approve that which others have said, or make known their errours.

Wee must examine the publick Registers of the

Greeks, see what actions they report, consider when such actions done, that the order of times may appeare, and cleare the Histories of the past ages, in reducing them according to the sequell of years: in conclusion, we must turne over the leaves and Notes of all the earth.

But me thinks I have already made half the proof, in shewing from whence it ought to be taken. Certainly it is better to defer the spinning out this point any further; for feare that touching it in haft, I say not all that the importance thereof requires, or that in resting here, I stay too long from the principle meanes of our Defence.

CHAP. XX.

IF defer to shew the antiquity of holy Scriptures, I will shew you at present something more important in lieu thereof: for I discover to you their Majesty, I tell you, they are divine, if you doubt still they are ancient. There's no need of any long discussion to let you know it, neither will we go to seek the proof without us. The World the History of all ages, & the event of things do furnish us all don in our dayes was foretold heretofore, what our Fathers heard spoken of arrived not till after them; the Prophets whom the providence of God instructed touching the time to come, have foreseen & left in writing that which passed every moment to the view of men, they

they have knowne what wee see, that Earthquakes swallow up great Cities; that the Sea covers Islands, and takes them from our sight; that the people are afflicted with strange, and intestine warres; that one kingdome destroyes another; that famine and the Plague, cause mortallities; that every countrey hath its perticular calamities; that wild beasts inhabiting the mountaines, doe hurt in the plaines; that the little become great, and contrarily, that the lofty by a miserable change fall into a low fortune; that there is little justice among men, and very much iniquity; that the thought of all good things is lost; that the functions of the seasons and elements are in disorder; that the order of nature is troubled by Monsters, and prodigies, all these misfortunes are found in our bookes, whilest wee endure, and try them, our judgement obliegeth us to believe those who have forerold them: I thinke the accomplishment of a prophecy is a good testimony of its holinesse, and one may conclude it is divine, when find it true.

Now as we believe things that have been prophecied, and are come to passe, so we believe things that have been told us, & not as yet come to passe, because they have been alforetold us by the same Scriptures, as wel those that are verifi'd every day as those whose successe is stil expected, they are the same words which wee heare, the same letters that instruct us, it is the same spirit which hath inspired the Prophets both the one, and the other. Hee that by the grace of God, hath the gift of penetrating into the time

i me to come, discovers in an instant all future things: men which have not this light, distinguish the times by the events, and seperate the time to come, from the present, and the present from the past. Tell mee I pray, if we commit any fault, when we believe that which should come, seeing the present and the past are two degrees; by which we learne, that we ought to believe that which is foretold, although we doe not as yet see the success?

CHAP. XXI.

I Have told you our Religion is grounded on very ancient monuments; that is to say, on the Books of the Religion of the Jews: yet because there are many among you know it to be much newer then this, & that it began under the Empire of *Tiberius*, & we acknowledge it our selves. It imports that I explain my selfe more particularly on this subject, that wee may not be accused of covering our owne opinions under the vaile of a most famous Religion, and whereof the publick exercise is permitted. We must take away the scruple that may arise, not onely in that we are distinguished from the Jews by the times, and novelty of our institution, but also for that there is a difference betweene their ceremonies and ours, that wee forbid not as they doe the use of certaine meats, nor solemnize their feasts, nor use circumcision, and in the end, carry not the same name: which

are arguments you hold infallible, to prove you doe not ſerve one God.

But that which helps to confirm you in the opinions you have of us, is, that you all know, even unto the meaneſt of the people, that Jeſus Chriſt was Man, that as ſo hee was condemned by the Jewes, which carries you eaſily to this perſwaſion, that we worſhip a Man, and not the God of the Jewes. But the behaviour this ungratefull people have uſed to our Maſter, doth not make us aſhamed; contrarily it is a glory to us to paſſe for his children, and to bee perſecuted for his name, and the honour we beare to him derogateth not from that wee owe to God, neither have wee any other opinion of the Godhead then the Jewes.

I am therefore obliged to ſpeake a few things of Jeſus Chriſt, and to ſhew hee is the true God. The Jewiſh Nation of all others had the happineſs to be the onely beloved people of God. They received this favour becauſe of the wonderfull piety, and inviolable faith of their ancient Patriarks, and therefore was their race ſtill raiſed to that admirable greatneſs, their condition came to a power that made it ſo flouriſhing, and their felicity ſo perfect, that God communicated himſelfe to them, and with his own mouth taught them to honour him alwayes, and not to offend him. But they had too much confidence in the merit of their Anceſtors; that which ſhould have tied them ſtraitly to the ſervice of the Divine Majeſty, made them forget their duty: they ſinned againſt God, and by a ſtrange blindneſs, neg-

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lected his Commandments, and changed his Lawes into a prophane worship. If the Jewes will not confess their crimes, the condition they are now in, will be a sufficient proofe thereof. They are spread over all the Universe, they wander from all parts, are banished from their Countrey, cannot injoy the aire they breathed at their birth; and run over all the world, without having either man, or God for their King; in conclusion, their condition is so miserable, that it is not permitted them to set so much as their foot, or cast their eyes on their naturall Countrey, or to passe thither as strangers. The holy Scriptures that threatned them with these evils, are full of Propheſies, that foretold them that in the last times God would chuse servants faithfuller then they, whom hee would take to himselfe in all Nations, and Countreys of the World; and on whom he would powre graces much perfecter, then those they had received, proportioned to the merit of the Messiah, which should come to publish the Law which he would give them.

Therefore the Messiah which God had ordained to send on the earth, to change the Law of the Jewes, to discover the truth of these figures, and to accomplish the Propheſies; this just Dispensator of Divine graces, this excellent Master of this heavenly Doctrine, the true light that inlightens, and Doctor that teacheth men, and to say all, this Son of God was promised us. But do not think this Son is ashamed of his birth; hee hath beene begotten; but know, that neither the seed of his Father, nor the name of Son,

which he beares makes him ashamed: His generation is not defiled with the incest of Brother, or Sister, neither of a gods unchast imbraces with a Maid or married woman: His Father not a god disguised under the forme of a Serpent, Bull, Bird, or golden showre, as of your feigned god *Jupiter* it is reported.

Besides, the Son of God whom wee worship, it's true hath a Mother; but not a Mother defiled with the least impurity, she to whom the birth of this Son hath given the name of Mother, being still a Virgin without carnall knowledge of any man. But to make you comprehend how the Son of God is born, I must discover to you what his substance is. I have already declared, that God created the Universe by the power of his word, the operation of his wisedome, and the vertue of his power.

The ancient Wise-men also were of this opinion, that the word and wisedome, which they named of one onely word λόγος, that is to say, the word, did make the World. *Zenon* saith, this word is the Authour of that order, and admirable disposition we see in nature; also that the same that is called Destiny is God, the mind of *Jupiter*, and necessity of all things. *Cleanthes* makes a spirit that goes into all the parts of this Universe. As for us, as wee say God hath made all things by his word, wisedome, and vertue, wee attribute to the word, wisedome, and vertue of God, a Spirit that is their proper substance, and which is the word to command, the wisdom to dispose, and the vertue to give perfection to his works.

workes. Wee have learnt that God hath produced this ſpirit which we call the word, that God in producing it hath begot it, and therefore it is the Sonne of God, and alſo God in regard the ſubſtance of God and his owne Son, are but one ſelfe ſame ſubſtance; becauſe God is alſo a Spirit; it is even as of a beame comming from the body of the Sun; this Planet in producing the ſame, gives it a portion of its light, which notwithſtanding it cannot loſe; for it is alwayes in its beame, becauſe the beame is alwayes a beame of the Sun; the ſubſtance of the light is not ſeparated, but ſpreads forth. So in the internall generation of the word, the ſpirit derives from the ſpirit, and God derives from God, as the light of a Candle is taken from another Candle which hath communicated to it its light; the light remains all intire in the Candle from whence it is taken, and ſuffers not any diminution, although men borrow the quality to diſtribute it to many Candles.

It is even ſo of God, that which comes from him is God, the Son of God, and both together, God and his Sonne, are one and the ſelfe ſame God. From whence it follows that this diſtinction of ſpirit to ſpirit, of God to God, is not in the ſubſtance, but perſons makes not a diviſion in God, but only a diſtribution of the qualities of Father and Son; not a diverſity of conditions between Father and Son, but onely an order of God the Father to God the Son: and finally that God the Son ſpringeth and is not ſeparated from the ſubſtance of God: wherefore the beame of God being come downe into the body of a Virgin, and in-

carnat in her wombe is come likewise into the world Man and God together. This marvellous composure of mortall flesh, & the spirit of God, hath been nourished, brought up, growen in years, spoken, taught, & wrought, & is that Man Jesus Christ. Take it you wil, this truth for a fable, you may receive it in the meantime, till we bring further proofs of our Master, as we receive many tales made touching those gods you confess. This wonder was knowne to them of whom you hold all the follies you believe of a Deity.

They have invented them by a sacrilegious emulation, to destroy the eternall truth of a God-man, in exposing to them the lies which have some relation with them. If then you will have witnesses of the incarnation of the Son of God, we tell you the Jews knew it from the mouths of the Prophets, that hee was to be borne among men, and they expect him still, and the greatest difference between them and us, is, that they doe not believe he is already come. The holy Scriptures make mention of two commings of the Son of God: the first, when he appeared in the weaknesse of humane nature, and condition of a very low humility. The second, which to bring with it the end of all times, and wherein he will shew himselfe with all the splendor of his God-head. The Jewes have not heard of the first, and they hope for the second, which hath been so clearly declared, perswading themselves that the Son of God should come this onely time on the earth. Their sins are

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the just cause of their blindness, they have deserved by their crimes committed against God, not to understand this first comming; yet without doubt, they would have believed this glorious Mystery, if they had understood it, and if they would have believed it, he had acquired for them eternall salvation.

This punishment was foretold them, and they may read in the holy Scripture, that God hath threatned, they should not know his secrets, that their understanding should not comprehend them; that they should have eyes, and not see his light; eares, and not heare his word. Now, as they could not imagine him whom they saw in this low humility, to be a God, so they took him only for a man; whom when reflecting upon them the effects of his power, they gave out, that he used Magick, and by the helpe thereof cast Divels out the bodies of men, restored sight to the blinde; cleansed the Lepers; healed them that were sicke of the Palsey; raised the dead; made the Elements obey him; appeased Tempests; went upon the waters; all actions by which hee shewed himselfe to be the ancient Word, the first born, accomplished with vertue and wisdome, as also informed with the spirit of God himselfe.

The Doctors of the Law, and the greatest among the Jewes, who saw when he preached, that he confounded their errours, and that an infinite multitude of people followed him, were so incensed against him, that, in conclusion, they accused him before *Pontius Pilat*, the then Governour of *Judea*, under the autho-

authoritie of the Emperour *Tiberius*; and by violating juſtice, forced him to deliver them Jeſus to bee nailed on the Croſſe. Hee foretold they ſhould thus unworthily uſe him; but, it may be, 'twould not be enough if the Prophets had not declared it a long time before: yet Jeſus being on the croſſe gave many ſignes, by which he ſhewed hee was truly the Son of God; for after making that great exclamation, when a dying, he rendered, of his own accord, his ſpirit to God his Father preventing therby the Executioners, accuſtomed to breake the thighs of thoſe that were crucified, to haſten the end of their lives, and deliver them from the pains of a longer punithment.

Moreover, in that very moment wherein Jeſus expired, which was at noone, the Sun loſt his light, and the Earth was covered with darkneſs; even they who knew not this prodigy ſhould happen at his death, and that revealed before to the Prophets did take it for a miracle, and becauſe unwilling to diſcover the reaſon thereof, they denied it that came to paſs: But you cannot make this wonder ſuſpected, ſeeing your owne Calenders have remarked it, and your ſelves retaine the teſtimonies thereof in your owne regiſters.

The Jews having took Jeſus from the Croſſe, and put him into the ſepulchre, encompaſs'd it with a great number of Souldiers, to whom they gave charge to keep him carefully: This ſuſpicious people, feared his Diſciples ſhould come and take away his body, and having committed this theft, perſwade them hee was riſen, becauſe hee had ſaid, that in three

three dayes hee would rise from the grave, and triumph over death.

But the third day being come, the earth shooke on a sudden, the stone that shut the mouth of the Sepulchre was overturned, the Souldiers astonished, and troubled with fear, and not one of his Disciples durst appeare, that they might be accused of taking away his body, which not being found, there remained nothing in the grave, but the linnen wherewith he was wrapt. Yet notwithstanding the High Priests divulged this bruit, that the body of Jesus was taken away by his Disciples. They had reason to publish this false theft, that they might turne away the people from embracing this Doctrine, otherwise themselves should lose the authority they had over the People, and the profit they drew from them, if they had knowne that hee whom they had crucified was truly the Son of God.

Their mindes being thus abused by the ambition and avarice of the Priests, they remained in the darknesse of errour; for Jesus Christ shewed himselfe not to the People, because hee would not doe this favour to the wicked, to make them become faithfull, in presenting before their eyes his glorious body, and it must be that the faith that promis'd such great recompences, should bee wrapt up with some difficulties.

After his resurrection he stayes with some of his Disciples forty dayes in Galile, one of the Provinces in Judea, where hee taught them what they should preach to men; and having given them to declare his Doctrine throughout all the Earth, a cloud invi-

roned him, wherewith received up to Heaven, a truth far more certain then any humane testimonies, given of your *Proculus* touching his seeing a *Romulus*, or other of your *Princes* mounting up into the same place.

Pilate, who in his heart believed in Jesus Christ, at the same time wrote all this History to the Emperour *Tiberius*, whereupon the *Cesars* themselves had worshipped our Master, if their government in so doing had been consistent with the men of this world, and Christians permitted to have beene saluted *Cesars*. The Disciples of Jesus, following the order hee had given them, went over all pares of the knowne world to publish the Law of the Gospel: But the Jewes, their declared Enemies, made them indure many punishments, which they suffered generously, because they knew they were hated only for preaching the truth. In the end, these Infidels taking advantage of the cruelty of *Nero*, caused the bloud of the Christians inhumanly to be shed.

But remember when wee told you of the gods you worship, we said we would produce them as fit witnesses of the Godhead of Jesus Christ. Is it not strange we should imploy them whom you withold from being Christians, to make you believe the Doctrine of Christians? yet you shall see by and by, that your gods beare witness, in favour of our Religion, against your Idolatry. This wee shall tell you, when come to declare to you, wherin consists all the mystery of our institution; then you shall know both the originall of our Religion, the name, and the

the Author thereof. Let none therefore object to us any more these crimes so full of infamy; let none any more conceive these strange opinions of our lives, you must needs believe what wee declare to you touching the worship we render to God.

Religion is a sacred thing, where it is not permitted to feigne, and where lies are counted sacrilegious. Every man that saith he worships other God then whom he pretends truly to worship, is an Infidell to his God, and takes from him the honour hee should render him to transfer the same to another; and in transferring it, acknowledgeth not his Godhead any longer, because hee violates it in denying him. We say openly we are Christians, we avow it publickly, yea even in the midst of tortures, the which you make use of to make us deny it. When we are torne in pieces and covered with our blood, we cry out, as far as our voices will extend, wee worship God in Jesus Christ, believe if you will Jesus Christ to be man onely. It is by him, and in him nevertheless that God will bee known and honoured. So to the end wee may answer the Jewes, Have not they learn'd to worship God on earth by *Moses*, a man whom God sent to teach them to serve him, and that he made use of *Moses* as a man, to publish his Law? as for the Greeks, were not they men that instructed them in their superstitions? to wit, *Orpheus* on the mountain of *Pierius*, *Museus* at *Athens*, *Melampus* at *Argos*, and *Trophonius* in *Beotia*. Then if I should cast mine eyes upon you, who are the Masters of all the world, do I not finde it was a man, a *Numa Pompilius*,

that put upon you a Religion so full of ridiculous mysteries, and troublesome ceremonies? Why should it not be permitted Jesus Christ also to declare his Divinity, he to whom only the Divinity appertained, and to make himselfe acknowledged for the God of Heaven and Earth? He ought not to be suspected for an Impostor as others, for he was not like to a *Numa*, who would not suffer the wilde spirits of these savage people, and barbarous, in filling them with astonishment by the infinite number of gods which made them afraid. He addrest himself to men polisht & perfectly knowing in the prudence of the world, and yet withall their wisedome, were blinde as concerning Heaven. He came to enlighten, and discover to them the truth they knew not. Informe your selves whether the God-head of Jesus Christ be the true God-head we ought to worship. Whether it change their manners that believe it, and makes them become better then they were, all the other Deities must bee condemned as false, and principally that which is under the names and Images of dead men, by the artifice of certaine supposed signes, of the miracles they counterfet, and the deceitfull Oracles they render, passe for a true Divinity, although it is knowne that all it doth is but the worke of Divels.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXII.

WE say then, that there is in Nature certain spirituall substances, to whom the name of Divils is given. This name is not new, the Philosopher had the knowledge of it, and *Socrates* did nothing without the permission of his Divell. So they say, that from his infancy this Divell was always by him, and abandoned him not so long as he lived. *Certes* this spirit was not proper but to turn him away from the love of good things. The Poets also knew what the Divels were, and the ignorant common people, have them in their mouths when they would pronounce a malediction. It is by an inward motion of the soule, that in those imprecations in calling the evill spirits, in effect they call Satan, who is the Prince of this cursed Company. *Plato* did also acknowledge the nature of the Angells, and the Magicians who in their inchantments make use of the names of Angels, and Divels, to bee testimonies of their being. One may learn from the holy Scriptures, how by the sin of certain Angels, who for the irregularity of their own will suffered their innocence to bee corrupted, came the race of the Divels, a race much more corrupted then these evill Angels from whence they draw their originall, and that God hath condemned with them, and their Prince, those of whom we come from speaking

king of. Wherefore it sufficeth that wee now treat of the point that concerneth the operations of these spirits.

They worke on men but to destroy them; the malice of the Divels from the beginning of times was imployed in doing evill. Thus they afflict bodies with diseases, and make them fall into troublesome accidents; they stir up in mens mindes violent troubles, and sudden motions, which move them extraordinarily. Their simple and subtile nature gives them the faculty of laying hold of the two substances that compose man.

The power with which these spirits operate is admirable, one may very well know their action; but the manner of their operation falls not under the object of the sight, neither can bee perceived by the organ of the senses. As when there happens any secret irregularity in the aire, the distemper thereof makes the fruit to be lost in the blossome, takes away its life when it begins to put forth, and nips them at the very time of their maturity: even as when the aire is infected by some sudden cause, it spreads the plague upon the earth among the vapours that the Sun had drawn up, in the same manner, and with a contagion as unperceiveable, the Divels and evill Angels by their blast cast disorders into mindes, agitate them with divers furies, give them thoughts of folly and filthiness, make them capable of more violent passions, and slide therein an infinite number of errours. Of these errours this is the principall, that, after they have abused, & wrapt them up into a thou-

sand

sand illusions, they recommend them to the worshipping of these false gods, and oblige them to offer sacrifices to their Idols, that they may be fed with the odour of the sacrifices, and the bloud of these beasts which is their most agreeable nourishment. For what nourishment do they taste with more pleasure then the Idolatry of man, when by the wiles of their false juglings, they seduce them, and turne aside their thoughts from the object of the true God? I will now discover by what way they deceive them.

Every Spirit hath the same nimblenes as a bird, and because the Angels and Divels are spirits, they are every where in a moment. All the world is but one place to them, it is all one with them to know what is done in every coast of the world, as to say it. This promptitude with which they know all things, makes them pass for gods, because their substance is not knowne.

So they will often appear to bee Authours of that which they declare, & in effect they are sometimes of evill, but never of good. Besides, they learnt heretofore from the mouthes of the Prophets the things which eternall providence hath determined; and now they take them from the holy Scriptures: it is from thence they draw the conjectures by which they judge of the times to come.

They observe the changes that have happened in the sequell of times, and they strive to appeare like to a Deitie, by the thefts they make of these predictions wherewith they abuse the world. They work

upon

upon all with a wonderfull cunning to expreſs the oracles they render, by termes full of ambiguity, that they may accommodate themſelves to the events. *Craſus* and *Pyrrhus* could tell much newes. It was by the meanes we before ſpoke of, *Apollo* declared, that *Craſus* had boiled his Tortoiſe with the fleſh of a Lamb; hee had learnt it in *Lydia*, where he was in an inſtant. Moreover the Divels, who have their reſidence in the aire, by their neighbourhood with the ſtarres, and the neareneſſe of the clouds may know the diſpoſition of the Heavens.

They promiſe men raine which is ready to fall, and which they feele when they promiſe it. Truly wee muſt avow they are very helpfull in the cure of diſeaſes: for they are they that doe the evill, and afterwards ordaine the remedies, but they are remedies wonderfull new, and contrary to the evill: after one hath made uſe of their receipts, they ceaſe to afflict the body, and then wee thinke they have cured it.

What ſhall I ſay more concerning the trickes of theſe deceitfull ſpirits, and their admirable effects; of the ſpirits of *Caſtor* and *Pollux*, who brought to *Rome* the news of the victory obtained on King *Perſeus* of *Macedonia*, preſently after it was won? of that *Veſtall* that received water in a ſieve? of another that made a great ſhip ſaile which ſhe drew onely with her girdle? of that *Damilia* to whom the ſpirits of *Caſtor* and *Pollux*, by their onely touch, changed the colour of his beard, and of black made it become red, that he might have ſome marke to make him

believe

elieveb it? when declaring to him this victory allready obtained by the Romans all these things which are the workes of the Devill have authorised Idolatry, perswaded men that stones were true deities, and hindred them to seeke the true God; this high and incomprehensible majesty to whom onely worship is due.

CHAP. XXIII

But seeing Magicians have power to make spirits appear to men; seeing they recall the souls of the dead, whom they cover with infamy by their witchcrafts; that by the force of their enchantments, Children are made use of in their charmes to throw themselves on the ground, and afterwards rise up againe to declare Oracles; that by the delusions, wherewith they deceive the eyes and eares, they represent a great number of miracles; that they infuse dreams into us when asleepe, and worke all these things when once by the vertue of their invocations they have obtained the help of evill Angels and Devills, who make their goats, and tables prophesie: When this power worketh of one accord, and for it onely; with how much more affection doth it imploy all its forces to effect what it produceth, when there is no question of any interest but of that which is a stranger to it? If the Angels and Devils do the same things as your gods,

where is the excellencie of the deity, wee must imagine to bee above all other powers? Is it not more seemely to presume that they are they that make themselves to bee acknowledged for gods, seeing their actions are like to them they take for actions of the gods, then to believe the power of the gods is not greater then that of Angels and Devils? but it may bee your gods are gods but in the temples, it is the place that gives them the title, and that out of temples, you do not acknowledge them for gods; that in your opinion, it is another kind of fury to leape over consecrated towers to a deity, then to precipitate ones selfe from a prophane house, that it is another sort of rage to cut off ones privy parts, and armes, then to cut ones throat, in truth the despaire both of the one and the other meet both in one, as it is but one cause that transports them. But hitherto we have made use of nothing but wordes; now wee must make use of the things themselves, and demonstrations, to shew you that your gods and divels are but one substance; and that they differ but in name.

If a man should bring before your Tribunalls, one that were truely possessed of a Divell, if a Christian should comand him to speake, this wicked spirit wil confess then that he is a Devill, with as much truth as he saith, falsely at another time he is a God. Let them present any one of these they believe to be wrought upon within by a deity, that in the ceremony of the sacrifices they offer on the Altars, have the vertue of a God in fenting the smell which goes out of the sacrifices; who with force belch out words out of their stomacks; within breathing de-

clare

clare oracles; if this heavenly virgin who promiseth raine; if this *Æsculapius* that teacheth the secrets of Physicke, that preserves the lives of them who must lose the same soone after, confesse not by the mouths of these impostors, whose fained inspirations deceive the world, that they are but devills, if the presence of a Christian takes not from them the boldnesse of lying, wee are willing that in the same place you shed the bloud of this Christian, and punish him as a wicked person. What demonstration is clearer then this? what proofe more infallible? truth shines there in its purity, it is assisted with this force, that is not proper but for her selfe; there is nothing heere to bee evill thought on. Say then it is done by the power of Magick, or by some such like tricke, if your eyes or eares will let you. But I pray what can you say against a thing that shews it selfe so cleare and without artifice? if these spirits are gods indeed, why do they falsely say they are devills? is it to obey us they do so? on this account the deity receives law from the Christians, but they should not honour with this title, a nature that is under the government of man: I might add, that is subject to the power of his enemies, if it causeth shame.

If on the other side these spirits are Divels, or Angels, how comes it when they speake to others then to us, they would passe for gods? for as those to whom divine honour is rendred would not be avowed Divels, if in truth they were gods, because gods cannot take the qualitie of Divels without putting off their majesty; so, if the names they give

themselves whom you acknowledge to bee Divels, were the names of true gods, they could not bee so rash as to take, and to put them in the rank of a Deitie; because these gods would without doubt bee their Soveraignes, and they would feare to offend the majestie of them whose power they should dread.

Acknowledge then that the Deitie you honour is not a Deitie, because, if it were, the Divels would not attribute it to themselves, and the gods would not disavow it. So seeing both the one and the other concur in acknowledging this truth, that those the world acknowledge for gods are none, you must confess then they are Divels, and therefore you must resolve to seek Deities somewhere else, seeing you now see what is the condition of them you take for gods.

Now seeing by our meanes your gods discover to you they are no gods, and that all the other to whom men erect Altars, are none in like manner, but this at the same time they make you know who the true God is, if it be this only God that we that are Christians worship, if we must believe of him what the Christians believe, if hee must bee served as their Lawes ordaine. When you conjure your gods in the name of Jesus Christ, doe they aske who is that Jesus Christ? doe they call the History of his life a Fable? doe they say hee is a man of the same condition as other men? that hee was a Magician? that, after dead, his Disciples tooke away his body privately from the Sepulchre?

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and that he is now in Hell? say they not rather hee is in Heaven? that hee must discend to the terrour of all the world? with horrour to the Universe? with the lamentation of all men but Christians? and that hee shall come downe on the earth full of Majestie, as the vertue of God, the spirit of God, the Word, Wisdome, Reason, and Son of God? your gods must doe as you doe, deride all these things, denie all the souls that liv'd since the Creation of the world should take their bodies againe; that Jesus Christ must judge them, they should say it belongs to *Radamanthus* and *Minos*, according to the opinion of *Plato*, and the Poets; at least they should discharge themselves of the shame of this sin, and infamy of their condemnation, not avowing they are spirits of corruption, although it sufficiently enough appeares by the condition of their meats they feed on, the bloud, smoake, stinking sacrifices of beasts, and impure tongues of their Divines that they are so; and in the end not confess they are already condemned to the pains of Hell, expecting the universall judgement, where they shall receive the just recompence of their wickednes, with all them that have sinned as they, and worshipped them. Now all the power we have of them, is the name of Jesus Christ who gives it us, it is the threatning we give them of the evils God is readie to powre on their heads, and which one day Jesus Christ must declare to them. As they feare Jesus Christ in God, and God in Jesus Christ, they are under the government of the servants of God, and of Jesus Christ: so by the onely touch

of our hands, and breath of our mouths; the Divel seized with feare at the sight of the flames that environ them are forced to obey us, to come out of the bodies they possess, in dispite of them, and with murmuring, to suffer this shame in our presence. You that are wont to believe them when they lie, believe them when they speake of themselves. No body will tell a lie to get shame by it, but rather to gaine honour; one will sooner beleve them that confesse against their owne interest, then those that denie to their advantage. These Testimonies which we have of your Gods make men to bee Christians; for wee cannot give a full beleefe to what they say, without believing in Jesus Christ our master. Your gods kindle in our hearts the faith which the Holy Scripture teacheth us; they strengthen our hope, and confirme us in the assurance wee have of our salvation. As for you, to honour them, you offer them also the blood of Christians; and if it were permitted them to lie when Christians interrogate them, and labour to make you know the truth by their confession, they would take good heed of discovering your errours to you, as well for keeping the profit they have of them, and the honors you render them, as for the feare they might have that in becomming your selves Christians, you drive them away as wee doe from the bodys they torment with so much rage.

CHAP

CHAP. XXIV.

WEE need nothing but the acknowledgment wee have from your gods, when wee make them confesse they are no gods, and when they answer us there is no other God, then the onely God we serve, to purge us from the crime of high treason, and impiety to the Roman Religion. For if in truth the Gods they worship are no gods, if truth their Religion is no Religion; if their Religion bee no Religion, then those they acknowledge for gods, are none, it follows wee are not guilty of the crime of impiety. On the contrary wee can maintaine, that this reproach reflects on you, that, because so long as you honour a lye, you neglect not onely the true Religion of the true God, but moreover oppose God; and by this meanes truely fall into the crime of true impiety.

If we should agree your gods are true gods, would you not confesse, according to common opinion, that there is a God greater and stronger then they, who is as the principall and author of the Universe, and accomplished with power, and an infinite majesty? for many have this opinion of the Deity; that to one onely God belongs Soveraigne power, and that hee commits the exercise of his functions to all the other Gods: what is that *Plato* would have presented

preſented, when hee writ, that great *Jupiter* is in Heaven accompanied with an army of Gods and Divels. You may ſay, we muſt honour the officres and Liveteanants of a Prince, even as the Prince whoſe majeſty they repreſent. But I demand of you, what crime commits hee who regards none but the Prince, hopes not but in his favour, and will pleaſe none but him? what outrage commits he againſt the Godhead that gives not the name of God but to the Prince of Heaven? ſeeing in the world they give the name of Emperour but to the Soveraigne, and that it is a Capitall crime, by humane lawes, to call, or ſuffer to bee called with this title any other, then the maſter of the State? But let one worſhip God, another, *Jupiter*, let one in ſaying his prayers lift up his hands to Heaven, another put them on the Altar of faith; let one, if you will, number the clouds, another the ſeelings; one vow his ſoule to his God, another offer him that of a goat. But you ought to take heed that this bee not a kinde of impiety, to take from men the liberty of ſerving God after their owne manner, to hinder them from making choice of a deity, and force them ſo in that which ſhould depend upon the will, that it ſhould not bee permitted them to worſhip the God they would, and bee forced to worſhip him they would not.

Know wee not very well that neither the gods, nor men, demand any thing but voluntary ſervices: and this is the reaſon they ſuffer the vaine ſuperſtitions of

of the Egyptians, who by a strange blindnesse consecrate Birds and Beasts, and condemne to death them that have killed one of these gods. Moreover every province, and citty hath his particular God, *Syria* the God *Astartes*; *Arabia* the God *Disares*; *Bavaria*, *Belenus*; *Africa* the goddesse *Celestis*; *Mauritania* their Kings.

The provinces I have named, me thinkes, are subject to the Roman Empire, and yet I have not named among the Gods that are there worshipped any of the gods of the Romans; in effect the gods that are honoured in these countries, are as little known at Rome, as those that are worshipt in the Cities of Italy, as the God *Belventinus* of *Monte-rotondo*, *Visidianus* of *Narni*, the Goddesse *Ancaria* of *Ascoli*, *Nursia* of *Vulsina*, *Valentia* of *Ocricoly*, *Nortia* of *Sutry*, and *Juno* of *Monte-fiasconi*, who is cald upon there, because there she was born, and to whom the inhabitants of the place gave it the name of her father. There are none but we to whom it is forbid to have a Religion a part.

Wee offend the Romans, because not serve the God of the Romans, and are unworthy the names of Romans. But we have this advantage, that God is the God of all men, and that we are all his, whether we will or no. As for you, it is permitted you to worship all sorts of gods, excepting the true God; as if the same were not by way of eminence, the God of us all, seeing we all are his.

CHAP. XXV.

IN my opinion I have ſufficiently proved, what the falſe, and what the true Divinity is, ſeeing I have drawne my proofs, not onely from Arguments which reaſoning produceth, but alſo from the ſole teſtimony of thoſe you acknowledge to be gods; ſo that I have largely given ſatisfaction (as I think) in this point. But becauſe in this place, an occaſion is preſented to ſpeake of the name *Romans*, I will not avoid the combat that ſome oblige me to undertake, againſt the opinion that hath ſeized on their mindes, and makes them ſay, the *Romans* obtained the Empire of all the world, and this greatneſs whereto wee ſee them arrived, by their pietie, and deſerved to bee Maſters of all the Nations of the Earth, by the reverence carried by them to the myſteries of the religion of the gods, the gods having rendred them flouriſhing beyond all other honours, becauſe the Romans ſurpaſs all other in devotion.

There is ſome likelihood the *Romans* received this Recompence from the originall gods of *Rome*, in acknowledgement of the honours the *Romans* rendred unto thoſe gods; for example, the gods *Stercutus*, *Mutunus*, and *Larentina*, who inlarged the bounds of their domination. For I doe not thinke the other gods had more inclination to a ſtrange Nation, then to their owne Countrey, or that they would have

ſubjected

subjected to a people so far remote from their Countrey, the Land where they were borne, where their youth brought up, where they acquired so much honour in their life time, or where finally after their death they had buriall given to their bodies. *Cybele* will not disavow the affection she bore to the City of *Rome* to be produced from that she carried to *Æneas*, because hee was of her Countrey; shee defended him against the Armies of the Greeks, and loves the City where she still sees the bloud of Trojans, and progeny of that Prince. Without doubt, when resolved to favour the Romans, shee foresaw they would revenge it, and put Greece in servitude, which had ruined the Empire of Troy.

Certainly, shee hath caused it to bee seene in our time, that it was with a great deale of reason the City of Rome delayed to give unto him Divine honours; for *Marcus Aurelius* having ended his dayes at Sirmion, the seventeenth of March, the chiefest Priest of that goddesse, this venerable chiefe of the Evnuches, the foure and twentieth of the same Month of March, with the horrour and impurity of the bloud he spilt, and which came from the wounds hee made in his body, rendred his vowes, as hee was wont, for the preservation of this Prince after he was dead. O sleepie Courtiers! O sedicious Dispatchers, whose tarrying the cause that *Cybele* was not acquainted sooner with the Emperours death! truly Christians could not choose but make derision at such a goddesse. But had it beene in the power

of Jupiter to disposse (as he thought good) of the Empire of the world, would he have suffered the power of the Romans to put his Isle of Creet insubjection? Would you think, the remembrance of the cave of Mount *Ida*, with the noise the *Corybantes* made, in beating on their head attires, and playing on their cymballs to hinder those childish cries from discovering him: again, the acceptable smel of the breath of his nurse, should not obliege him rather to oppose himselfe against this conquest? would hee not have preferred the place of his buriall before all the greatnesse of the Capitol? would hee not rather have enclined to have raysed up above all the countries of the earth, that which enclosed his ashes? would *Juno* have taken it well that Carthage, which she preferred before *Samos*, should be overcome and destroyed, even by the race of *Æneas*, if I bee not deceived.

—— Hic illius Arma,
Hic currus fuit; hoc regnum dea gentibus esse,
Si qua fata sinant, jam tum tendetque fovetque.

Englished thus by *John Ogleby* out of *Virgill*.

—— Here her Arms, and here
Her Charriot was: that this Earth sway should beare
(If Fates permit) she fosters and intends.

This unfortunate sister and wife of *Jupiter* had not the credit of changing the decrees of destiny,

—— Fato stat Jupiter esse.
—— To Fate, was Jupiter *himselfe conforme.*

And

And yet the Romans have not done them so much honour, although they put Carthage under their power, against the designe and desires of *Juno*, as to an unchast whore, and a villanous and an infamous. *Laurentine*, now of all the gods you honour, its certaine there are many of them that have raigned in the world; if they had now the power to give Empires and kingdomes, whilst they were kings, and commanded men, of whom received they their authority? what gods have beene worshipped by *Saturn* and by *Japiter*? it may be twas some *Sterculus*, to whom they gave immortallity because he first found out the invention of dunging the earth, but hee lived since their death with the people that inhabited the territory of Rome. If any of your gods have not had the Soveraigne power heere below, in their time, there were Kings that rendred them not as yet Divine honours, because they were not as yet acknowledged for gods; from whence it followes that it belongs to others then to them to give kingdomes, because there were kings established a long time before they consecrated these deities.

But see how ridiculous a thing it is to attribute the greatnesse of the Romans, to the merit of their piety and care had of Religion, seeing their Religion became much more pompous and costly since their estate grew powerfull, and their dominion enlarged. For although *Numa* was author of all your superstitious mysteries, yet in his time the Romans served their gods without Images and Temples, their Reli-

ligion being then void of all coſtlineſſe and oſtentation; their ceremonies then neither rich, nor magnificent, wee ſaw not as then Capitolls raiſed up to Heaven, but onely altars of turfe made in haſt, as ſerved occaſion and upon neceſſity: the veſſels for their ſacrifices were as then but of earth, from whence onely iſſued the odor of all the bloud of the beaſts which were ſacrificed. Engraven repreſentations of the gods then no where appeared. For the Greeks and Tuſcans who firſt invented the art of making carved images to the gods were not as then ſpred in the City of Rome. Its true therefore the Romans were powerfull before they were Religious, neither was it their piety that was the cauſe of their greatneſſe

For, how ſhould the care of Religion become great to them, who owe their greatneſs to impietie and ſacriledge? for if I bee not deceived, Kingdomes and Empires are eſtabliſhed by diſorders of war, and increaſe by victories. Wars and victories ordinarily produce the taking and ruine of Cities. Which things cannot bee done without offending the gods. Fury at the ſame time indifferently aſſaulting the walls of Temples and Cities, ſlaughters involving Prieſts and Citizens without diſtinction, and the Souldier eager for his prey, ſparing no more ſacred things, then prophane. In which regard the *Romans* committed as many ſacriledges, as they obtained conqueſts; triumphed as often over their gods as over men; all Images of ſtrange and captive gods, yet in your Temples, remaine as ſo many booties taken

ken from people overcome by you, and these gods suffer their enemies to worship them, giving an endless Empire to them, whose outrages they should rather have punished, then recompensed after that sort their sacrilegious flatteries.

But as it's unprofitable to honour these gods that have neither sense, nor knowledge, so it's as little dangerous to offend them. *Certes* true pietie permits not to believe, that this people who (as aforesaid) encreased Religion by scandalizing it, against scandalized Religion in labouring for its judgement, should get this great power to which arrived, by any reverence borne by them to divine things, neither is it otherwise in like manner, to be believed, that those Nations, whose Countries conduced in their being conquered by them, unto the Roman greatness, before losing their Countreys, should bee destitute of all manner of Religion.

CHAP. XXVI.

REturne then into your selves, and examine if it bee not more likely that it's hee distributes Kingdomes, he to whom the World belongs which Kings governe, and whom Kings depend upon, who command on the Earth; that it's hee that hath ordained the change of Empercurs in the sequell of times, and course of ages, who was before all times, and who from times hath composed the ages, that

rayseth

raiſeth up eſtates, and makes them fall from their greatneſs, whom men have acknowledged for their Authour before they had eſtabliſhed among them any ſocietie: confeſs your errour. *Rome*, this Citie heeretofore a field, is ancienter then any of your gods; ſhe had her Laws reverenced before ſhe built this vaſt and magnificent worke of the Capitol. The *Babylonians* reigned before the creation of your high Prieſts. The *Medes* before that of the fifteene men, whom, you propounded to conſult on the *Sybils* Bookes. The *Ægyptians*, *Aſſyrians*, and *Amazones* poſſeſſed great Empires before we heard ſpeak of the *Saliens*, *Lupercals*, and *Veſtall* Virgins.

After all, if the gods of the *Romans* diſpoſed of Kingdomes, the Jewiſh Nation who alwaies neglected theſe kindes of Deities, had never formed an Eſtate powerfull as it hath done: they abhorred your Idolatry, and on the contrary, you have ſacrificed oblations to their god, you have preſented gifts to his Temple, you have lived in alliance with them along time, and they had never fallen under your power, if they had not offended their God by the unworthy treating they uſed to Jeſus Chriſt.

CHAP. XXVII.

MEE thinks we have purged our ſelves very well of the crime of high treaſon, when we ſay we offend not your deities, becauſe wee ſhew

ſhew they are no deities. Therefore when wee are exhorted to preſent them ſacrifices, wee oppoſe for our defence, the truſt wee put or owe to the light God hath given us: wee call our conſciences to our aide, which ſhews us certainly, to whom the worſhip you render to theſe images ſhould be adreſſed, which are expoſed to a ſacrilegious adoration, and to the names of men you have conſecrated; but ſome ſay there is folly in our reſiſtance, wee may ſacrifice when preſt to it, and conſerve our lives without injuring our conſciences, in keeping a ſecret reſolution to remaine firme in our Religion, and that in neglecting our ſecurity, wee prefer a vaine ſelf-will before our welfare. So you give us an adviſe that teacheth us how to deceave you, but we know the author of this counſell, and who inſpires it into you: wee know the crafts of that wicked one, who ſometimes by the wiles of his perſwaſions, ſometimes, by the force of torments makes us ſuffer, ſtrives to overthrow our conſtancy. It is that malicious ſpirit whoſe ſubſtance is that of Angels, and Divels, who by his ſin finally falling from grace becomes our enemy, and envies at that ſtate of happineſſe wherein by Gods gracious aſſiſtance we yet remaine, and who puts projects in your minds to aſſault us, who ſecretly excites theſe furious motions that corrupts all functions of reaſon in you, and diſpoſe you to do us the injuſtice we ſpoke of in the beginning of this diſcourſe, of condemning us againſt the rules of juſtice, and in tormenting us, although guilty of no fault: for although all power of De-

and this wicked ſpirit, is ſubject to us, yet it falls out ſometimes, that like unto wicked and faithleſſe ſlaves, in the midſt of the feare they have of the authority God hath given us over them, they give themſelves over to actions of diſobedience and revolt: and as the ordinary effect of feare, is to produce hatred, they ſtrive to wrong them, whoſe power they feare.

Beſides in the eſtate of rage, and deſpaire to which they are reduced, becauſe their condemnation is already pronounced, they find content in their wickedneſſe, they ſolace themſelves in their evils, by thoſe they make againſt the ſervants of God, againſt the day of the laſt judgement when they ſhall bee ſhut up in hell to ſuffer there eternally.

Neverthel eſſe, they combate not with us after this ſort but at a diſtance, for when wee come neare them, they muſt yield, being under our power, and are forced to acknowledge the miſery of their condition, ſo the Devills that aſſault us when far from us, have recourſe to entreaties when we affront them neare hand. Therefore when we muſt undergoe ſuch puniſhmẽts as you ordain for your wretched ſlaves, when they ſhut us up in priſõs, whẽ they cauſe us to be condemned to work in the mines, or to ſom other ſervile work of the ſame condition, in the end when they exerciſe all their rage againſt us, by the impetuous motions of fury that tranſports them becauſe they ſee they are ſubjected to our authority, knowing their forces are inferior to ours, and therefore our victory is aſſured, and their deſtruction is inevitable, then

then we defend our selves against these troublesom & importunate spirits, as if they were our equalls, wee resist them by a holy perseverance in the faith which they strive to destroy; and the most glorious triumph wee can gain over them, is, when our constancy and firme resolution in the Religion of the true God condemns us to death.

CHAP. XXVIII.

BUT seeing Religion cannot bee forced, and the service of God is a pure act of the will, it seemes, it were injustice to force free men to offer them sacrifices, and would be ridiculous to obliege them to honour the gods in despite of them, seeing they ought to be carried by their owne motion and interest to seeke their favour; if they be true gods, wee should not snatch away the advantage that gives them the liberty of their nature: It should be permitted them to say, I will not have *Jupiter* favourable to mee: who are you that will force my will? I feare not *Janus*, I laugh at his anger, of which side soever of his two faces he looks upon me, what power have you to meddle with what concerns me? but the same spirit that inspires you to presse us to sacrifice to the gods, excites you to ordain us to sacrifice for the health of the Emperours, & by this meanes the interest of *Cæsar* being mingled with that of the gods, you cannot avoyd the necessity of constray-

ning us, and we cannot hinder our lives from being in peril, if wee will be faithfull to God. So wee are come to the second head of high treason, but against a majesty more august then that of the gods: for you render your duties to the Emperour with more feare, and an apprehension more industrious, then to your *Iupiter* you place in Heaven; and I find you doe wisely if you knew the true condition of this King of gods: for, tell me, whatsoever he be of the living, is he not to be preferd before the dead? but that which you doe is not so much because reason obliegeth you to it, as for the consideration of the power present with you, and which before your eyes exerciseth a soveraigne authority on the earth: therefore you shew your selves impious towards your gods, in being more afraid of the Princes of the world, then of those gods you professe to worship. Finally there is lesse danger with you to cal all the gods together to be witnesses of a false oath, then to sweare falsely by the genius of *Cæsar* onely.

CHAP. XXIX

BEfore then you can force us to sacrifice to the gods, it must appeare they can preserve the lives of the Emperours, and the rest of men: when you can shew us they have this power wee are willing to be declared criminalls, if we addresse not our prayers to them for the welfare of our Princes:

If

If the gods you serve, who are no other then the miserable spirits of evill Angels and Devills, worke any good: if they that destroy themselves preserve others: if the condemned deliver those that exclaime against them: and lastly if the dead, as you know in your consciences your gods are, protect the living.

Why defend they not rather their statues, images, and temples, who in my opinion owe their conservation to the souldiers that guard them? But tell me if the matter, wherof these statues are formed, be not taken out of the mines of the Emperours inheritance? and if all these temples depend not absolutely on his will? There are many gods have had experience of *Cæsar's* anger; and this is an advantage to us that the Prince being favourable to them, hath used his liberality and accorded some priviledges to them.

Now how is it possible that they that are subjects to the Emperour, to whom all the world is subject, should have the welfare of their Emperour in their power? there is more likely-hood they have their welfare from *Cæsar*, then *Cæsar* from them.

What? offend we the majesty of the Prince, because we cast him not under the things appertaining to him? because we turne not into derision the prayers which should be raysed up to Heaven for his preservation? and believe not that it is in the hands of the leaden statues of your gods? Truely you appeare very pious to your Prince, being you seeke his welfare where it is not, and demand it of them who can do nothing, forgetting him that hath the power,

to give it; and seeing you persecute men who can demand it, and knowing how to aske it, know also how to obtaine it.

CHAP. XXX.

AS for us, in the prayers wee make for the Emperours, wee call upon the eternall God, the true God, the living God, this God to whom the Emperours prefer their assistance before that of other gods; they know very well who gave them the empire they possesse; and men as they are, know who gave them the spirit wherewith they are animated. They acknowledge there is no other, then this onely God, through whose power alone they subsist, to whom they are inferiour one degree onely, after whom they are next in place; before and above all other that are called gods. Why should they not be greater then these gods, seeing they are masters of all the living, which are more worth then the dead? they consider how farr their authority goes, and apprehend the essence of God in proving they can do nothing against him; also seeing God greater and of more power then themselves, they are forced to acknowledge they can doe nothing but by him.

Let the Princes of the earth make as many designes as they please to subdue Heaven, undertake to carry Heaven in triumph as a captive, command courts

courts of guard to be kept in Heaven, strive to make Heaven tributary, they labour in vaine, hee is great, because not altogether so great as heaven. To him heaven and all creatures appertaine, the Emperour drawes his originall from the same place whence man drew it before hee was Emperour: the author of his soule, is the author of his power. It is to him to whom wee Christians, addresse our prayers, make them with hands opened, and lifted up, because innocent; the head bare, because no cause to bee ashamed when wee pray to God. There are none declares to us the words we are to say, because it is our heart that acteth rather then our tongue: Wee pray for all the Emperours, and aske of God that he would give them a long life; that their Empire enjoy a profound peace; their house a happy concord; their armies be invincible; themselves assisted with good counsells; the people remaine in their duties, no trouble arise in the world against their authority. In the end, we forget nothing the Prince can wish for, either as a man, or as an Emperour.

Nevertheless, we cannot aske these things but of him of whom wee know wee shall obtaine them: as hee is the onely one that must grant them, wee are they alone that must pray for them, because we and none but we are his true subjects, for of all men hee is worshipped of none but us, let them put us to death because wee follow his doctrine, and offer his rich and fat sacrifice, which hee will have us consecrate unto him, to wit a prayer conceaved and produced from a chast body, an innocent soule, assisted with

with holinesse, and not with the graines of incense of little value, the teares of that tree of *Arabia*, two drops of wine, the blood of an Oxe ready to die of old age, and for that reason even to bee rejected in true sacrifices; finally after all sort of uncleanesse, with a contaminated conscience. In effect there is wherewithall to wonder that among you, the Priests (vicious as they are) exactly consider if the sacrifices are pure and intire, they examine rather the inwards of the sacrifices, then the insides of them that offer them, then whilst we implore the grace of God for the Emperours, with our hands lifted up, and stretched toward heaven, let irons pierce us, *gibbets* put us on crosses, fires consume us, knives cut our throats, beasts devoure us: A Christian while in prayer lifting up his hands to God is in a condition fit to receave all sorts of punishments; and therefore continue, O magistrates, so affected to justice; ravish our soules, whilst they are in prayers for the welfare of the Emperours, and make a crime of truth and the service of God.

CHAP. XXXI.

BUT it may bee you imagine our hearts belie our words, that what we come from saying, of the vowes wee make for the welfare of our Emperours, is but flattery, by which wee thinke to shelter our selves from the torments prepared for us:

But

But if wee lie faigning, this faigning is not unprofitable, seeing you admit us to prove what we alleadg for our justification: wee entreat them who believe our Religion takes no care of the preservation of the Emperours, to examine the lawes of our God, to read our bookes which wee hide not, and which by divers accidents fall into other hands then ours. They will learne there that it is commanded us by a superabundant charity to pray to God for our enemies, and to wish good to them that persecute us.

Now have wee greater enemies, and ruder persecuters, then those who make offended majesty the ground of the crime they impute unto us? Holy Scriptures content not themselves with this commandement; they have another more precise and clearer, "pray, say they, for Kings, Princes, and powers, that you may live in peace in the midst of publicke tranquilitie"; for, if the Empire be shaken, all its members suffer a generall shaking, it is impossible we should not feel it, because although people take us for strangers, yet seeing wee occupie certaine places, as well as they, wee make a part of the state as well as they, and together with them participate of its good and evill fortune.

CHAP. XXXII.

VVEE have yet an obligation greater then that, of praying to God for the

Emperours, all estates of the Empire and prosperity of the Roman affaires. Wee are assured that the generall dissolution that threatens the Universe, and this consummation of ages which must bring such fearefull confusions in the world, is retarded so long as the glorious majesty, and triumphant Roman Empire shall last.

We desire not to bee present at the subversion of all nature, and when wee pray to God to deferr it, we pray to him that the power of the Romans may long subsist. If wee sweare not by the Genius of the *Cæsars*, wee sweare by their welfare, which is more precious then all manner of spirits together. Know you not that they call Genies Devils? wee reverence the providence of God in the persons of the Emperours, that raysed them above all nations. Wee know they governe the world with this supreame authority, becaus God would have it so; and wee desire their conservation, becaus God would have us desire it. And the prayers wee make for the welfare of Emperours, are in the same esteeme with us, as most solemnē oathe.

As for Devils, or Genies, we are wōt to conjure them to drive them away from the bodies of men, whereof they are seased, and render them not the honours due to God onely, by swearing by them.

CHAP. XXVIII.

But

BUt why ſhould I ſtay longer in making knowne with what ſenſe of Religion and pietie Chriſtians honour Emperours? It ſufficeth to ſay wee are oblieged to render them our duties, as to whom our maſter hath commanded us ſo to doe: I can eaſily add, the Emperour is more Emperour of the Chriſtians, then of his other ſubjects, becauſe the God of the Chriſtians hath eſtabliſhed him, in regard whereof wee labour more to purpoſe for his welfare, then other men, becauſe wee aske it not onely of the onely God who alone can grant it us, not onely wee that demand it who are fitly quallified for obtaining the ſame, but the prayers moreover which we make for him have ſo much the more efficacy, as wee abaſe the Emperours Majeſty under that of gods, we ſubmit it to his onely power; to the greatneſſe of God, becauſe wee equall it not to him; for I give not the name of God to the Emperour, either becauſe I cannot lie, or have not the forhead to mocke him withall, or that himſelfe will not have me call him God.

If hee bee man, hee hath reaſon to acknowledge that God is more then he, it being ſufficient for him to be called Emperour: this name which God hath given him is full of dignity, hee that calls him God, denyes that hee is Emperour, becauſe if hee bee not man he cannot be Emperour. Even when hee is ſet on his triumphant chariot, and ſees himſelfe rayſed up to the higheſt degree of humane felicities in this world, he ſhould be advertiſed then, that he is man. There is a voyce that ſayth, looke behind you, re-

member what pompe ſoever environs you, you are ſtill but man: we ſhould diminiſh without doubt very much of his greatneſſe, if in this eſtate we ſhould call him God, becauſe its a title that belongs not unto him, and contrarily wee honour him agreeably to the majeſty of his eſtate, when we call back his ſpirit to the conſideration of what he is, that hee may not believe he is a God.

XXXIV.

AUguſtus to whom the Empire owes its eſtabliſhment becauſe Lord is the ſirname which wee give unto God, would not ſuffer his ſubjects to call him their Lord; yet I will make no difficulty to acknowledge the Emperour is my Lord, but it ſhall be, when not forced to call him my Lord, in the ſame ſenſe that appertaines to my God.

When I ſay the Emperour is my Lord, I will not forbeare in ſo ſaying to preſerve my liberty. This kinde of reverence makes mee not his ſlave. For I have but one onely true Lord, to wit the powerfull and Eternall God, who is his God alſo as well as mine.

But how can it be that the father of a countrey is the Lord of the ſame? certes, a name of piety is much more agreeable to ſuch a man, then a name of power and authority. Secondly, therefore it is that we call the chiefe of perticular houſes, fathers, rather

rather then Lords of families: If *Augustus* would never take upon him the name of Lord, there's leſs appearanc of reaſon to attribute that of God unto Emperours. Its a flattery thats not onely infamous, but alſo of a pernicious conſequence: as if forgetting the reſpect due to the Prince, (to whom this great Empire renders obedience) you ſhould thereby transfer the title of Emperour to another; is it not true you doe an extreame injury to the Emperour, whom you acknowledged before for your maſter? by this caution you render him irreconcilable to you, and his hatred kindled by you, is dreadfull to him as well as unto you whom you have honoured with the name of Emperour; You your ſelves muſt bee pious to God, if you deſire to have God propitious to your Emperor. You muſt ceaſe to believe thers any other God, by forbearing to call your Emperour ſo who hath need of the aſſiſtance of God.

But if the pleaſure of the world ſo governes your ſpirits, that you bluſh not when you call man God againſt your owne knowledge, you ought, at leaſt, to feare this title you attribute to him, be not an ilOmen; for its the making of an imprecation againſt the life of the Emperour, to call him God before his apotheoſis.

CHAP. XXXV.

SO then Christians are publick enemies, because the honours they render to the Emperours, are neither vaine, flattering, nor rash; because that in the sense of the true Religion, they professe, they celebrate their solemne dayes, rather by the motions of a pure conscience, then the disorders of a filthy deboystnesse. Thinke you these are such great testimonies of affection, to kindle fires in the midst of the streets, to set up tables there, to make feasts in the publicke places; to change the face of the City into that of a great Taverne, to spill so much wine upon the pavement, that dirt is made therewith, and afterwards to run in troopes, for quarrels, for committing insolencies, for seeking of meates answerable to unruly appetites? Must a publick shame bee the marke of a publicke joy? must these things bee counted seemely on the solemne dayes of Princes, which at no other time, on no other dayes are either fitting or decent.

What? they who live according to the rules of exact discipline, that their prayers may obtaine from God the wellfare of the Emperour, shall they I say, change the manner of living, thus to houour the Emperour? shall liberty, and corruption passe for piety? What serves to enflame concupiscence shall it bee imputed an act of Religion? I confesse it is just

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to condemne us; for why while obſervers of chaſtity, temperance, and all other Chriſtian and morrall vertues, deny we them the licentiouſneſſe of making ſuch like brutiſh rejoycings and bedlam ſports for the welfare of the Emperours? why when all the world beſides in joy, ſhade we not our doores at the ſame time with laurells? why ſet we not up candles and burne (as wee uſe to ſay) in the proverbe daye-light with torches? for it is counted a meritorious thing with you, in celebrating publicke ſolemnities to adorne your dwellings with all manner of vicious ornaments agreeable to licentious youth in harlots houſes.

But let us ſee if they that envy us the name of Romans, and ſuppoſe us enemies, to the Roman Empire, fall not into the ſelfeſame crimes they reproach us with that are Chriſtians, let us looke into your lives, examine your hiſtories that therein diſcover whether or no you (the people I meane) who accuſe us after this manner, offend not more then wee this ſecond Majeſty, whether you commit not more then wee, this ſecond ſacriledge, a crime layd to our charge, becauſe wee ſolemniſe not with you the dayes you feaſt on in honour to the Emperours, with all kind of beaſtly ceremonies repugnant to our modeſty, chaſtity and purity. I addreſſe my ſelfe to this common people of Rome, to this popularity who occupy the ſeven hils of this great City, and aske them if their language, as Roman as it is, hath ſpared any of their *Ceſars*. The placcards fixt to the Statues of *Tiber*, and the Cirques where they bring

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the wild beasts, that are taught to teare men in peeces, andwhether they heare the people in the midst of these publicke spectacles speake ill of the Prince, can render sufficient testimonies heerof. If nature had given to man a body of as transparent a matter as a looking glasse, is there any in this great multitude, that appeares not with the image of some new Emperour engraven on his heart, set on a throne lifted up, giving order for the distributing of the presents the Princes are wont to make to the publicke at his comming to the Empire, at which instant hee heares these confused voyces which crie,

De nostris annis tibi Jupiter *augeat annos*?

Frō our own years, should *Jupiter* add more to thine.

A Christian can neither pronounce these words, nor make wishes for the change of Emperours. You say these are actions of the vulgar, but they are the actions of the Romans, and of those that are the greatest enemies wee can have, for its this popularity that crie the lowdest against the Christians. But it may be other Orders have beene faithfull to their Princes to the proportion of the authority they have in theState; that there is come out no conjuration from the body of the Senate, and of the Knights, that the Souldiers have not attempted the Emperours lives, they are safe in their owne pallaces: from whence then an *Avidius Cassius*, a *Piscenius Niger*, and a *Claudius Albinius*? from whence those that assieged the Emperor *Comodus* between the two lawrell woods? from whence those in the exercise of the *Athletes* got the force they imployd to strangle that Prince?

Prince? From whence those that forced the palace with their armes in their hands, with more impudence then the *Sigeres* had, and the *Parthenians*? If I bee not deceived they are all Romans, all these Parricides are of the Religion of them that professe not Christianitie. So that these people, at the same moment they went to commit these attempts so full of impiety, did sacrifice for the welfare of the Emperour, swore by his Genius, shewing themselves outwardly much different from that they were within, and gave to the Christians the names of publicke enemies. But so many persons as are dayly discovered to bee confederates, or approvers of this detestable party made against *Severus*, these rests of so great a harvest of parricides; what lawrells newly gathered, and covered with branches, did they not put up before their doores? with what elevated and lighted torches did they not blacke the entry of their houses withall? what rich and magnificent tables did they not set up in the chiefe places of Rome? not to take part in the publicke joyes, but that by the occasion of a solemnity ordayned for another, they made the Deities they cald on understand, that the prayers they had conceived, and changing in their minds the name of Prince, by the image of this pompe, they consecrated that of their hopes.

They that consult with Astrologers, Devines, Augures, and Magitians concerning the welfare of their Emperours, render them all theseduties; these curious sciences were taught men by the revolted Angels.

God hath forbid the use thereof, and therefore Christians make no use of them, so not to say what should be the successe of their owne affaires, but it is true one cannot without crime enquire of these impostors of the welfare of the Prince. For who can have an interest in it, but hee that hath a designe upon his death, who wisheth it, hopes it, and expects something should happen against it? Wee do not informe our selves of the fortune of our neighbours, with the same intention wee informe our selves of that of our masters. The curiosity that produceth the affection of blood hath other motions then that which enters in the mind of a subject by the hatred it carryes to servitude.

CHAP. XXXVI.

NOw seeing they who had the names of Romans, were enemies of the State, why doe they deny us the title of Romans, wee whom they call enemies? but cannot we bee Romans without being enemies, because it is found they were enemies who passed for Romans? Certes the piety we should have to the Emperours, the judgement of Religion, with which wee are obliged to pray for their welfare, and the testimonies of the fidelity due to them, consist not in these exterior duties whereof wee have spoken; contrarily under the vaile of these ceremonies men may hide their ill will; but it consists

sists in the ceremonies of the actions of vertue that commands the law of God, and that Christians are bound to practise, as much for the Emperour in particular, as for all the world in generall; for the good wee do, is not a tribute wee owe but to our Prince. Our good workes dirt against not the qualities of persons, because wee labour not for our selves, and looke not for the prayse, or recompense of men, but of God, who hath a faithfull register of our good actions, and gives us a rich recompense when they are manifested, and have not for an object any other consideration in the world. Wee live with our Emperours even as with our neighbours.

It is equally forbidden us to wish evill, to do evill, and to speake evill of our neighbours, yea to thinke evill of whosoever it bee: that which is not lawfull for us to undertake against the person of the Emperour, is not permitted us against any other person whatsoever: that which is not lawfull for us to undertake against a particular, is perhaps lesse lawfull against him God hath raysed up to so great dignity.

CHAP. XXXVII.

IN effect, if (as wee have said heer before), it bee commanded us to love our enemies, remaines there any wee must hate? If revenging in iury received, bee forbidden us, as also to commit the same fault, they that have offended us, remaines

there any one, to whom it is lawfull for us to do a displeasure unto? judge of it by your owne knowledge? How often by a blind obedience, render you as much to your passions, as to your lawes; you employ the sword and fire against Christians? How often doe these people, being our enemies, of their owne accord, without your authority, assault us with stones, or burne us? Certes, they are so enraged against us, that during the furies of the *Bacchanales*, they spare not even Christians that are dead, but trouble the rest of their graves, they violate their Sepulchers, which are as sanctuaries of the dead, they draw forth their bodies not to bee known whose bodies they are, after mangled by them, which with extreame inhumanity they teare and drag in the streets. In the midst of all these outrages, have you observed that these people, who (as you thinke) have formed so strange a conspiracy, and on the other side might bee animated enough for revenge by the punishments, wherewith you make them lose their lives, endeavoured any thing against you to resent the evill treating they have received? Think you that they want an occasion? When in one night onely a small number of torches would be enough to satisfie their revenge, if with us it were permitted to render evill for evill; but God forbid wee should doe so.

A Religion that is all Divine ought not to revenge by the instigation of men; and must not think it strange to suffer that which is made use of to prove them. If we would declare against you, as o-

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pen, rather then pursue you as secret enemies, might wee not have forces and troopes enough? It may bee the *Moores* and *Marcomanes*, the *Parthians*, or whatsoever people they are, shut up in the bounds of the Countrey they inhabit, make a greater number of men, then they that are spred throughout all the Universe, and have no other limits then that of the world. Our originall is but of late, and we fill already all that your power acknowledgeth, Cities, Fortresses, Isles, provinces, the assemblies of the people, the armies also, the wards, and tenths of Rome, the Palace, the Senate, and the publicke places; Finally wee leave you but the Temples. What warrs were wee not able to undertake? With what promptitude might we not arme our selves, although wee should bee the weaker; wee that suffer our selves so willingly to bee killed, if in our Religion it were not rather lawfull to let our selves bee killed, then to kill others? Wee would also make warr against you without taking up armes, and casting our selves into a revolt; it were enough not to live with you, and to seperate our selves, our divorce would print shame in your foreheads. For if the Christians, who make so great a multitude of all sorts of persons, should abandon you, to retire into some Countrey of the world dispersed from all society; truely the losse of so many Citizens, of what condition soever they are, would disparage your government, and also our retreat would bee a rude punishment to you; without doubt the solitude that would remaine with you, this silence of all things, this generall

neral astonishment of nature, even as if all the world were dead, would frighten you, you might goe seeke subjects to command, there would remaine to you more enemies then Citizens: now you have more Citizens then enemies, because there are a greater number of Christians among you. But if we were not neare you, who would snatch you away from these secret enemies, whose malignant operations make so strange a confusion in your minds, and so horrible an alteration of your healths? I have heard speake of the possession of Divells, wherewith you are tormented from whence we deliver you freely and without reward; if wee had the spirit of revenge, it were enough to satisfie us, that these corrupted spirits might at all times seate on your bodies, and that entrance therein were alwayes open to them. But as you do not thinke of that you ought, to wit, so deare a protection, you cease not to declare a people, to bee your enemies, who do you no hurt, whose assistance is so absolutely necessary to you. It is true wee are enemies, yet not of men, but of their errours.

CHAP. XXX VIII.

THen being you see no evill can be imputed to our Religion, and on the contrary, the piety it teacheth, is saving to men; you should let them have better usage then that they have had:

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you could approve of them as of a lawfull and permitted society, because there is no such thing committed by them as is wont to be feared from factious societies, and such as is forbid by the lawes.

If I bee not deceived, the cause why Magistrates forbid them, is the care they have of the publicke tranquillitie: that the City be not divided in parties; for, that sooner disturbes all the orders of the Roman people, makes tumults in the midst of the assemblies of the multitude, and also disquiets the use of the lawfull pleasures of this people, when the pleasures they affect with so much desire possesse their eyes; for it is subject to receive diverse impressions. They interesse themselves in the factions made by the ambition of evill Citizens. They share their affections among them, and one may feare these disorders now more then ever, because we live in a time, in which men sell their services to commit violences. As for us, as wee care not for gaining honour, and possessing great matters of this world, nothing obliegeth us to assemble our selves against the prohibitions of Lawes; and its far from our thoughts, to meddle with publick affaires. Wee acknowledge but one onely republicke of all men, which is the world; Wee renounce your Lawes, as wee condemne their diverse originalls, by the knowledge wee have that they are the effects of superstition and idolatrie.

Finally, wee regard not what passeth there, have no comerce with the furies of the Circques, with the unchastity of the Theatres, the vaine exercise of the

Athletes,

Athletes, and the cruelties of the amphitheater. If lawfull for the *Epicurians* to faine a voluptuousnesse to themselves, wherein they established the truth of the Soveraigne good. In what then do we offend you, if wee take other pleasures then yours? but if wee will be ignorant of all kind of delights, me thinks it is not for your interest; and if there be any losse, it falls all upon us. We reject, say you, the things that please you: wee have reason so to doe, because our pleasures are not yours.

CHAP. XXXIX.

After shewing Christian Religion (which you call a factious society) innocent of all crimes by you attributed to it; its time I discover unto you its maners, to the end, that having refuted the evill wherewith it is reproached, I shew you the good wherewith it is repleniſhed. Wee make a body, or by certaine knowledge all conspire in the service of the true God, where we live united under one Discipline, and one onely Faith, or, by a happie conjunction, conceive all of us the like hope of eternal felicity. We assemble together by troops in our prayers to God, as if thereby wee would carry as by force, the grant of whatever prayers we present unto him; it is a violence that is agreeable to him; we pray to him for the Emperours, their Ministers, the

the magistrates that have the exercise of their power, for the polliticke estate, the tranquillity of the Empire, the retarding of the generall dissolution that must put an end to all things. Wee assemble together to read the holy Scriptures, and wee read them according to the condition of the times, what serves either to admonish, or confirme the faithfull. In effect the Scriptures nourish our faith, lift up our hope, and assure the confidence wee have in God, nevertheless we cease not to confirme our discipline by the strength of precepts we continually repeate.

In these assemblies wee make exhortations, and threatnings, and exercise Divine censure, that banisheth sinners, and excludes them from our communion: wee judge them with very much circumspection, because we know that God is in the midst of us, and sees what we doe; and certainly it is a great fortelling of the judgement God will, one day, pronounce against the wicked, when the Church, moved with the enormity of their crimes, darts out upon wilfull sinners the thunderbolts of excommunication, and deprives them from the participation of its prayers, its society, and all sort of holy commerce with it. In our assemblies there are Bishops that preside, and have authority over all the faithfull committed to their charge; they are approved by the suffrages of them whom they ought to conduct, and it is not bribes that acquire them this honor, but testimonies given of their good life. For in the Church of God nothing is done by the allurement of

gifts: if there be among us any kind of treasure, the money layd up makes our Religion not ashamed; neither can it be sayd what brought unto us is a tribute, or price payed to participate of its holinesse: every one contributes a little sum, at the end of the month, or, when hee will: but it is, if hee will, and can: for none are constrayned to give: if wee get any almes, it is of good will, riches gathered in this manner are as the pledges of piety; wee do not confound them in eating and drinking with excesse; we make not use of them for the fowle and loathsome exercise of gluttony: but we employ them in feeding the poore, and burying them, in comforting children that are destitute of parents and goods, in helping old men who have spent their best dayes in the service of the faithfull, in helping the poore that have lost by shipwracke what they had, and in assisting them that serve in the mines, are banished into Islands, or shut up in prisons, because they professe the Religion of the true God, that during the time they suffer for the confession of his name, they may be nourished with the stocke of the Church. But its a strang thing that this charity among us gives occasion to som to blame us. See, say they, how they love one another; this astonisheth them, because they hate one another, See, say they, how they are ready to die one for another, but as for them they are ready, to kil one another; & I think, they have nothing to say against the name of Christian we give one another, for with them paternal names, & the affinity that blood produceth, expresseth but a tained affectiō, & disguised

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amity. It muſt not ſeeme ſtrange to you if wee call one another brethren, ſeeing wee are all your brethren by the right of nature, which is mother to us all. Wee have the ſame principles as you, but you renounce the humanity common to us; becauſe you are evill brethren to us: but with how much more reaſon are they called and eſteemed brethren; who acknowledge one ſame father, to wit, the living God, that have received the ſame ſpirit of Sanctitie, who being ſhut up in the ſame darkeneſſe, and ignorance, as children in the belly of their mother, came forth happily, and in opening their eyes were frighted at the ſight of the ſame light, which is that of truth? But, it may bee, it is not believed we are brethren indeed, becauſe there are no tragedies, that ſpeake of the bloody diſorders of Chriſtians, or becauſe wee are brethren, but unto the common uſage of the goods of the world, which with you have the power to diſſolve the union of brotherhood; therefore, as we live with the ſame intelligence, as if we had all but one ſpirit, and one ſoul, we make no difficulty to put all things betweene us in common; we have nothing in particular but our wives, of all things in the world there is nothing but wives, whereof wee reject community; and, on the contrary, among them, of their wives onely there is community with other men; for as they have uſed to defile the mariages of their friends, they proſtitute alſo marriages with very much patience to the unchaſtitie of their friends: that which they have learnt, if I be not deceived, in the ſchoole

of a Greeke *Socrates*, and Roman *Cato*, who have ſometimes lent their wives to their friends, thoſe they married to have children by, to bee engendred by others then themſelves and out of their houſes. I know not if they lent them againſt their wills; for why ſhould they have any care of their chaſtity, whom their husbands abandon ſo lightly? O famous example of a Grecians wiſdome, and Roman ſeveritie! A Philoſopher and a Cenſor make a ſhamefull trade of the chaſtitie of their wives.

Now ſeeing wee live together with ſo much charity, that all our goods are common; why ſhould they wonder if wee make good cheere? for it is one of the exceſſes you reproach us with, beſides the infamous crimes whereof you accuſe our repaſts, you reproove us with prodigality; it may bee it is of us *Diogenes* hath ſaid, the *Megarians* make feaſts, as if they would die to morrow, and they build alſo, as if they would never die. Certes, each of you ſees eaſier the ſtraw in his neighbours eye, then the beame in his owne. The aire is corrupted with the ill ſents that goe out of the mouths of ſo many people, that ſpew in the ſtreets.

What, the *Saliens* could not make one repaſt, unleſſe they found ſome body that lent them money to ſupplie their expences? your ſtewards would bee troubled to make ready the accounts of the money ſpent in feaſts, where you vow the tenth of your goods to *Hercules*? In *Athens* they chuſe the excellenteſt cookes to celebrate the feaſt of the *Apaturies*, wherein the midſt of their deboyſtnes, they call upon the

the Deity of father *Denis*; the souldiers who have the charge of watching by night, to hinder the burning of the City, are troubled at the sight of the smoake that riseth in the aire, in making ready supper in honour of *Serapis*? And yet they will talke of nothing, but the excesse of the Tables of the Christians? But you need but consider the name given to our repast to know the quality thereof. They express themselves with the same word that signifies dilection with the Greekes, whatsoever the cost is that is made, it is profitable, for they gaine alwayes in this expence; because it hath piety for its foundation. Its a sweetnesse, wherewith wee comfort the want of the poore, but we do not treat them, as you those infamous gluttons, who glory in selling you their liberty for the price of the good bits, wherewith they fill their bellies in the midst of a thousand indignities. But wee will have the least served with our goods, because we know they, among all men, are, the most acceptable to God.

Then seeing our banquets have so honest an end, consider what our Discipline should be in the rest of our actions, even those which more concerne the duties of Religion; it permits nothing that is dishonest, nor far from modesty. Before wee goe to table wee are fed with heavenly meat; which is the prayer we make to God; wee eate as much, as is necessary to satisfie ones appetite, wee drinke as much as is permitted to persons that have a care of their purity. They that sit there take their refection with so

much temperance, as they may remember they are obliged to worſhip God, even at night. They entertaine one another as people that know God heares what they ſay. After the repaſt done, and waſht their hands, and lighted the candles, they are invited to prayſe God, and to ſing Pſalmes, taken out of the holy Scripture, or Hymns; every one compoſeth according to the capacity of his mind. By this it may be known, if they have committed any exceſſe at table; as the repaſt began with prayer, ſo it ends; they goe forth, not in diverſe troopes to defile their hands with the bloud of men, not in ſeverall bands running in the ſtreets, not to doe inſolencies; but with the ſame care they had in comming in, preſerving their modeſty and chaſtity.

Finally, Chriſtians retire with ſo much ſtayednesſe, that wee may very well ſee, they are not fed ſo much with corporall meats, as the ſubſtance of heavenly and holy diſcipline. Certes, it were but reaſon, that this ſociety of the Chriſtians ſhould bee reputed unlawfull, if it were like to that the lawes forbid; it were but good reaſon it ſhould bee condemned, if it were not different to that which deſerves to bee condemned; if one would reproach it with the ſame things wherewith they accuſe factious ſocieties. But tell me, did wee ever aſſemble to procure the hurt of any one? As we are ſeperated, we are the ſame alſo in a bodie: as wee are in perticular, ſo we are in generall: that is to ſay, in whatſoever eſtate we are found, we offend no body, wee injure no body; when any vertuous or godly people

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are associated, when any pious or chast persons assemble together, their union should not be called a faction, but a lawfull society.

CHAP. XL.

BUT, contrarily, the title of factious appertaines truely to them, who forme intelligences of unloing good men, whom they hate, who, by a wicked combination, lift up their voyces against the bloud of innocents, and ground not their hatred but on the false opinion they have, that Christians are the cause of al the calamities arrive in the world, and evills that people suffer.

If *Tiber* overflowes, if *Nilus* have not watered the plaines, if Heaven hath stopt its course, and not powred its raines heere below, if the earth quake, there bee famine, or plague, immediately they crie out, cast the Christians to the Lyons. What is one Lyon able to devoure so many Christians? But consider, I pray you, how many evills have afflicted the Universe, & Cities which make a part thereof before the Empire of *Tiberius*, that is to say, before the birth of Jesus Christ. Wee read that the Island of *Hierapolis*, *Delos*, *Rhode*, and *Co*, were heertofore lost with many thousands of men that inhabited them. *Plato* reports, that the Atlanticke Sea hath covered an Island of a greater extent, then *Asia*, and *Africa* together. An Earthquake made the Sea of *Corinth* appeare

peare drie, and the impetuosity of the waves seperating *Lucarna* from the firme land of *Italy*, and banishing it from its continent, hath made an Island, which is now known by the name of *Sicily*. Certainly al these accidents could not happen, but the people must have suffered strange misfortunes. But, I will not onely say, where were the Christians, the contemners of your gods, but your gods themselves, when the deluge covered & drowned all the world, or (as *Plato* supposeth) the flat countries onely? for, indeed, wee cannot but doubt your gods are since this generall inundation, the Cities where they took birth, & where they died, and those they built render testimonies therof: they would not have beene, they had not lasted till our time, if their originall were not after this Universal disorder, when the justice of God punnished all the world? *Palestina* had not yet served for a retreat to the people of *Israel* at their going out of *Egypt*. The *Iewes*, whose law is the source of the Christian Religion, was not yet established, when as two Cities neer to this province, *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* were consumed by a raine of fire: the Countrey retaineth still the odor of that ancient burning, and if the trees beare any fruits, they are fruits onely to the sight, so soone as one toucheth them they are turned into ashes. *Tuscany*, and *Campania* did not complaine of the Christians, when fire from Heaven consumed the City of *Vulsina*, and that of *Pompeyes*, was burnt by flames the neighbour mountaine vomited. No body, as yet, cald on the true God at *Rome*, when *Hannibal*, after hee had got the great victory

victory of *Cannes*, by the number of gold rings hee got of the *Romans*, and measured by the bushell, which made the count of the men killed in the battel. All people indifferently adored your gods; when the *Gaules* came with their armes in their hands unto the Capitol, and besieged it: but is it not a powerfull argument against your errour which wee see in your histories, that when Cities were forced, temples and walls had the same destiny? for, from thence I boldly conclude, that your gods send not these evills on the earth, because they are mortall, as well as you. If discover the source of the evils, wherewith the race of men have been afflicted in all ages, know it hath been their ingratitude hath excited against them the anger of God. For, they have alwayes offended this great author of nature, because not acknowledged the graces received of him. Hee hath given them the knowledge of a part of his greatnesse, in exposing before their eyes the beauty of the Universe, which publisheth his honour so highly; and instead of imploying themselves in so noble a search, they faigned to themselves other gods, to whom they have rendred the honour that appertained not, but to him alone.

After this fault, they committed another, which is, in not seeking out him that is the master, and example of innocencie, and who is also the judge and revenger of sin, abandoning themselves to all sorts of vices, and shamefully defiling themselves with execrable crimes: the which, if they had looked into, as they were obliged, without doubt,

they had knowne him, and in knowing, honoured him, and after that had sooner resented his favours, then his wrath. Let them not then trouble themselves about the cause of these evills, but know they are the effects of the fury of this same God, who, in all ages, hath given them proofes of his indignation, before they heard speake of the name of Christians. Man this wicked race that inioyed at ease all the goods God created for him, before all false gods, adored by him were forged, will hee not comprehend that these evils came from the hand of him to whom he hath not rendred homage for his goods? In sum, his ingratitude is his crime, hee hath offended the majesty of God, in failing to make due acknowledgement of him. Yet if make comparison of the calamities of the time past, with this time, wee shall finde since the very moment God sent the first Christians on the earth, publicke evills have beene more tollerable then before they were. Its very easy to discover the reason of it, the innocence whereof they make profession hath diminished the iniquities of the world, and begun to turne away, with their prayers, the just vengeance of God. But, see heere a manifest proofe of your blindnesse. During the great draught of summer, when an excessive heat stayed the raine, and hindred, that it fell not on the earth, in the time when every one desired water, that the fruits of the earth might come to maturity, you lose not the use of your pleasures, and deboistnesse, and among the pastimes you take in your bathes, your tavernes, and your unchast houses, you demand

demand of *Jupiter*, by divers kind of sacrifices, and by the use of many superstitions; the help whereof you have need; you ordain publicke prayers, where the people being barefooted invoke the assistance of the Gods, you seeke in the Capitole that which you cannot find, but in heaven; you stay till the seelings of your temples be changed into clouds, to give you raine, and thinke to obtaine that you desire, without addressing your selfe to God, and turning your selfe towards heaven, where hee powres downe his graces upon men. Our proceedings are much different from yours, in these publick necessities we mortifie our selves by fastings; wee practise continency, with all the severity wee can; wee abstaine, for a time, from all corporall nourishment, we take sackcloth and ashes, as markes of our affliction; and in this condition, wee strike at heaven with our cries; wee constraine him to have pitty on us; wee make him ashamed of our misery; and when wee have overcome the anger of God, and puld downe his mercy, you honour your *Jupiter*, and thanke him for a benefit comes not from him.

CHAP. XLI.

CErtainly, that which you say unjustly of Christians, Christians may, with good reason, say of you, that you do nothing but hurt the society of men, and by your crimes, every day,

draw publicke evills upon them; for the evill of punishment is the effect of the neglect you have of God, and the worship you render to statues: in a word its more credible, that God neglected by mankind, should bee sooner irritated against you, then those that receive his services, otherwise the Gods you honour would be very unjust, if in punishing Christians they make no difficulty to punish them also that adore them. They should seperate their servants from the condition of Christians, their enemies. You likewise oppose to us that this argument resists the justice of our God: becaus hee suffers that they who serve him feele the publicke evils, even as the prophane that do not acknowledge him. But observe the order our God hath established, and when comprehended it, you will forbeare this objection. Hee that hath ordained at the end of all ages the judgement of men, and to distribute to al recompenses or everlasting punishments, puts no difference betweene them before the consummation of time, doth not, before hand, make a seperation of the good and evill, but reserves it for his last judgement: in the meane time, hee equally treats all mankind, whether hee shewes them mercy, or reproves them in his anger: Hee will have both good and bad things common to his servants and the prophane; that wee may, in the society of the world, without any distinction, bee all tryed by his clemency and severity: as for us, as wee have learnt all these things of him, we love his clemency, and feare his severity; contrarily, you neglect both the one and the other, and from thence

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it comes that all the miseries the world receives from the hand of God, are, to us, voyces from heaven, that admonish, and exhort us to do well, and to you, they are chastisements of your crimes. In the midst of these calamities, wee feele no displeasure, for nothing tyes us to the world, and wee have no interest, but to bee gon ere long; besides, wee know, they are the disorders of your lives, that procure these evills, wherewith the world is afflicted; and if there falls any part upon us, because we are mingled with you, wee take occasion to rejoyce, because it puts before our eyes the truth of the holy scriptures, that confirme in us the confidence wee have in the promises made to us; that fortifies our faith, and assures our hope. If it be true, they are the Gods you honour afflict you so cruelly because of us, how is it possible you continue still to worship so ungratefull, and unjust gods; seeing, contrarily, to injure the Christians, they should rather assist, and defend you?

CHAP. XLII.

But, after all these crimes, they object against us, and say, wee are not any way profitable in commerce of the world. I know not how that can be sayd of us, seeing wee live with you, wee use the same meates, and the same habits as you, we have beene brought up the one as the other, and the

neceſſities of life are common betweene us. For, wee are not like the *Brachmanes*, or the *Gymnoſophiſts* of *India*, wee retire not into the woods; wee baniſh not our ſelves from all things neceſſary for life, wee continually remember, we have great obligations to our God, our Lord, our Creator: we reject not any good thing, his goodneſſe hath produced, for our uſe: we containe our ſelves in a juſt moderation, that wee may not take with exceſſe, or without having need: we remaine with you in the world, but not ſeperate from the ordinary commerce: wee are not without your publicke places, your markets, your baths, your ſhops, your Inns, your Faires. Wee ſaile, beare armes, cultivate the ground, and trafficke with you; ſo that wee mingle our functions with yours; and make open profeſſion of working for your ſervice. I cannot comprehend how you can imagine wee are not profitable to you, and that we contribute nothing to the offices of ſociety, ſeeing it is with it, and by it wee live: But if I do not aſſiſt at your ceremonies, if I celebrate not your feaſts, yet I am a man as well that day as other dayes. During the Saturnalls I goe not into the bath before day, becauſe I will not employ the houres of night and day unprofitably, yet I waſh my ſelfe at a convenient houre, that the bath may ſerve to preſerve my health and conſerve my life and blood: Is it not enough, when I am dead, that all my body growes ſtiffe and pale after it is waſhed? the daies on which are repreſented games in honour of your Gods, I eate not publikely, as you doe, according to the cuſtome of theſe wretched creatures,

creatures, who at the instant they are to bee devoured by wild beasts, fill their bellies before all the world for their last repast; yet in any other place where I eate, I eate the same meats as you doe. I buy no flowers to make a garland to put on my head: what is it to you what use I make of the flowers I have bought? mee thinks they are more pleasing to mee when they are free, unbound, and scattered without order. But, if wee must put them into the forme of a garland, wee are used, when they are in this condition, to put them neer our noses to smell to them. Let them that put them on their heads, try if it be more to purpose to smell by the haires, or by the organ of the smelling part? I am not at your shewes, but, if my appetite mooves mee to taste the good bitts that are sold in these assemblyes, I will rather buy them in the places where they are ordinarily sold. I buy no incense: if the marchants of *Arabia* complaine on it, let these strangers know more wares are spent, and with greater profuseness in burying Christians, then to fume the images of the Gods. You say, the tributes of the temples are lesse every day by the malice of men, that there is lesse given to them that keepe those holy places; but hardly can wee suffice to give comfort both to men, and to your gods that implore our charity. Wee think, it is enough to use liberallity towards them that aske it of us: Let *Jupiter* give us his hand, and hee shall not take it away empty; wee will doe him the favour, which our mercy refuseth to no body: Wee distribute more goods, in every street, then your Re-

ligion

ligion, with all its ſacrifices doe in all your temples; and, on the other ſide, if the tributes of the temple ſuffer any diminution, the republicke is oblieged for her owne to the piety of the Chriſtians, becauſe they pay what they owe with the ſame fidelity, which makes them abſtaine from all frauds, by which men are wont to retaine unjuſtly the goods of others. If one conſider but the loſſe the publicke receives by theſe trickes and lies, where you ſtrive to fruſtrate her rights, it will bee found that the dammage your evill conſcience cauſeth to the State in this onely ran-counter, carries away quite al the good you can do in any other thing whatſoever.

CHAP. XLIII.

I Acknowledge there are certaine perſons that have reaſon to complaine of us, and may truely ſay, there is nothing to be gained for them of the Chriſtians. They are firſt theſe infamous corrupters of chaſtity; theſe brokers of foule pleaſures, and diſhoneſt loves, theſe wretched creatures that ſerve the vildeſt miniſters of unchaſtitie; after theſe, Murtherers, they which meddle with giving of poyſon, and *Magicians*, and finally *Southſayers*, *Deviners*, and *Aſtrologers*. But it is very profitable in this life, to be unuſefull to theſe people; Yet in what manner ſoever it be, that our Religion cauſeth dammage to you

your affaires, it hath neither loſt wherewithall to recompence you by the helpe you may expect from it. How much do you eſteeme them, I ſay not them that deliver you from the power of Divells, them that pray for you to the true God: But, them you may have neere you, as aſſured guards, from whom there is nothing to be feared?

CHAP. XLIIII.

IN effect, there is cauſe to wonder your paſſion is ſo irregular, that in proſecuting the Chriſtians, you make no difficulty to take away the life of men that are profitable to the common wealth. The State receives by your injuſtice an evident damage, and important loſſe: and yet no bodie lookes to it: no body weighs of what conſequence the ſufferings are of ſo many perſons of good life, and the puniſhment of ſo great a number of innocents. We ſpeake as boldly of the Chriſtians you put to death, for wee have an unreproachable teſtimony of their integrity, which wee take alſo from your regiſters, Sirs, who are employed, every day, in judging thoſe that are kept in priſons, and who terminate their proceſſes, by the ſentences you give againſt them, of all the malefactors accuſed before you, of ſo many ſorts of crimes; is there any of them charged with Murther, Robberie, Sacriledge, and other faults, to whom they impute alſo that hee is a Chriſtian?

or elſe, when Chriſtians are preſented to be puniſhed as Criminalls, becauſe they are Chriſtians, is there any amongſt them, whoſe life like that of other priſoners? all the faulty wherewith your priſons are ſo filled that they are overcharged, are of your Religion; they are alſo of your Religion that make the mines groane under the weight of their blowes, they are the wretched creatures of the ſame Religion you are, wherewith the wilde beaſts fill their entrayles. All theſe poore criminalls, your Citizens breed up to make them cruelly kill one another before a bloody people, have the ſame opinion you have of the deity.

Finally, among all theſe wretched creatures, there not one Chriſtian, unleſſe hee be charged by iuſtice, becauſe of his name Chriſtian: Or, if there be found a Chriſtian attainted of any crime, hee hath no more the name Chriſtian, becauſe he hath loſt that Divine qualitie, in loſing his innocence.

CHAP. XLV.

ARe there none then in the world innocent but we, what marvaile? it muſt needs bee ſo; and otherwiſe it cannot bee: Foraſmuch as God, having taught us innocency; wee know it perfectly, as revealed from a perfect maſter, and keep it faithfully as diſpenſed by one who will not bee mocked by us in a ſeeming obedience unto what hee commands.

mands. As for you its the opinion of men that makes you innocent, and their rules that governe all; thence it comes your injunctions establish not fully the truth of this excellent vertue; and, as the things most effectuall to perfection are there wanting, so have they not the power of imprinting feare, in the hearts of those, that owe them obedience. For, tell me, what light hath humane learning to teach that which is truely good? What authority humane power to free men from embracing the true happinesse? If it bee easie to bee deceived by the one, it is no lesse common to neglect the other.

Let us consider a little your lawes, and compare them with those of our God; which law is more accomplished, that which saith, *Thou shalt not kill*: or that which saith *Thou shalt not bee angry*? which perfecter, that which forbids adultry, or which turnes the eyes from the object, surprising the mind when idle, causeth evill desires to enter into the soul thereby? which lawe wiser, that which condemnes evill deeds, or forbids evill speakings? which purer, that which permits not to do wrong to others, or which suffers not so much as to revenge wrong after done unto our selves? but this is not all; for you must know your lawes, which seemed to set out innocence, whereof notwithstanding they represent but an imperfect image, have borrowed that they have of good from the law of God, as far more ancient then what in lawes established by men.

I have already spoken of the time wherein *Moses* lived, and therefore not necessary to repeate what

before ſaid, to ſhew the lawes then publiſhed to bee the firſt, before all other humane lawes ſince, which have not the vertue of that primitive law: for, I pray you, what force have thoſe lawes, whereof men may avoid the ſeverity becauſe very often their crimes are covered, and wee may ſomtimes freely violate them when it is by accident, or conſtraint they are offended by us. But wee need do nothing to make them be neglected, but this conſideration, that the puniſhments are not of long continuance, and end with death: ſo *Epicurus* mockes at all ſorrowes and torments that afflict the body, becauſe hee ſaith, one ſhould not apprehend them if meane, and tolerable, and if violent they will not laſt long. As for us, who are to anſwer before a God, who knowes the moſt hidden things, and that his juſtice will revenge the faults of men, with paines that ſhall never end, it is with good reaſon wee labour onely to attaine true innocencie; the perfect knowledge wee have of ſo rare a vertue, the difficulty wee have to hide our actions from him that ſees all, the horror of torments this great God prepares for the wicked, torments that are not onely long, but eternall, obliging us to conſerve purity, whereof Jeſus Chriſt hath given us an example; for wee feare this God, the Iudges ought alſo to feare that condemne them, whoſe hearts are touched with this feare; that is to ſay, Chriſtians, who feare God, and not man, whatſoever power man hath on the earth to afflict them with.

CHAP.

CHAP XLVI.

I Thinke, I have cleared the Chriſtians of all the crimes, wherwith calumnious imputations make men thirſt for their blood. Explained all that tends to our juſtification; ſhewne, by what meanes, wee can proove the verity of the grounds of our Religion, in that I have produced the faith of antiquity conſiſtent with the Holy Scriptures, and the confeſſion ſpirituall powers make of the Divinity of Jeſus Chriſt. He that ſhall bee bold enough to make us paſſe for impious, ſhould not reſt on the skill of vaine eloquence, and the weake endeavours of fine words: but hee muſt make his prooſe in the ſame forme, as wee have eſtabliſhed ours. Certes, theſe teſtimonies are of great authority, but the admirable fruits our Doctrine produceth, the knowledge whereof is become publicke by the commerce wee have in the world, makes ſo downright a conflict with rude incredulity, that to defend her ſelfe, ſhe is forced to ſay our profeſſion, hath no matter in it Divine, but is onely a ſect of Philoſophy, that obliegeth Chriſtians to ranke themſelves there, in the exerciſe of morall vertues. The Philoſophers, ſaith ſhee, teach and practiſe the ſame things, Innocence, Juſtice, Patience, Temperance, and Chaſtity. If our Doctrine bee like that of Philoſophers, if the compariſon you make of us with them bee juſt, how

comes it, wee are not treated as they are? for with you their ſects are tolerated, and you do not puniſh them? But, contrarily, the Doctrine we publiſh is forbid by your lawes, and expoſeth us to all ſorts of puniſhments? or elſe, why are not they, you eſteeme like unto us, forced to doe the ſame things you impoſe upon us as neceſſary, and which wee refuſe on perill of our lives? for, is there any that forceth a Philoſopher to ſacrifice, or ſweare by their gods, or to light candles at noone? But, contrarily, they have the liberty to overthrow the worſhip of your gods openly, and to reprehend your ſuperſtitions in the bookes they compoſe, which when they make, you commend them, evidencing thereby that you approve of their opinions. Many among them raile impudently againſt the Princes of the world, and you ſuffer them, and the juſtice of the land hath rather recompenſes then puniſhments for them. They ſet up Statues for them, they recompence them with rewards, and wee heare not that they are delivered to the fury of wild beaſts, and muſt avow that it is with a great deale of reaſon, becauſe they beare the name of Philoſophers, and not Chriſtians. This name Philoſopher driveth not away Divells how ſhould they drive them away, ſeeing they put them in the ranke of gods, and take them and Divels, to bee for one and the ſame nature? *Socrates* had alwayes this word in his mouth, if my *Dæmon* permit me; and the ſame Philoſopher, who witneſſeth hee had the ſame light of truth, when hee taught we muſt not honour the gods, ceaſed

sed not to ordaine when giving up the Ghost, they should sacrifice a cocke to *Æsculapius*, I thinke it was an act of gratitude hee would render to *Apollo*, father of *Æsculapius*, because he said, *Socrates* was the wisest of all men: O strange imprudence of a God! he bore witnesse of the wisdome of a man, who denied the power of the gods. Now as truth is wont to kindle hatred, whosoever is faithfull to it and presents it all pure, and without disguise, is liable to bee checked by the lovers of this passion; but contrarily every man that makes profession of corrupting truth, acquireth by an action so detestable the favour of those who persecute it. The Philosophers will appeare followers of the truth; and because glory is the end they propose to themselves, in faigning to love it, they corrupt it; but the Christians that have their salvation for an object, earnestly desire it, with an holy necessity, and after they have met with it, conserve its purity, and publish it without bringing any change. It is not true then, whatsoever you imagine, that the knowledge and Discipline of Philosophers are like to ours; but there are other arguments of difference betweene them and us. What is this *Thales* Prince of Physitians who when *Cræsus* sollicited him to deliver what believe with certainty of God? Did hee not put him off with sundry delayes to thinke further upon it? every handicrafts man, the least Christian knowes God, and is able to shew how his greatnesse is to bee comprehended. He shews by the sensible things all that humane understanding finds in God, although *Plato*

affirmes

affirmes this author of the Universe cannot easily be knowne, and when know him, it is hard to expresse his nature, and make his essence be conceived. Besides, if you object to us that the practise of morall vertues is common betweene the Philosophers and us, let us examine them in particular. And to begin with chastity, I read the *Athenians* gave sentence against *Socrates*, as a defiler of young boyes; a Christian man as making love to a woman onely, accustomes not to seeke a brutish pleasure in changing the sex which nature hath ordained. I have heard a *Phrynè* hath beene made use of for *Diogenes* deboystnesse, and submitted her body to his fowle affections That *Speusippus* a Philosopher of *Platoes* schoole, was kild n adultery; a Christian is permitted to accompany with his lawfull wife onely. *Democritus* deprived himselfe of his sight, because hee could not looke upon women without lusting after them, and afflicted himselfe when hee could not injoy them, and so by consequence witnessed his own incontinence.

A Christian hath eyes, and yet in looking upon women, sees them not; that is, with any unlawfull concupisence, being wholly blind in his mind to such desires; though quicke sighted enough to behold such like objects with the eyes of his body. If question of common civility, behold *Diogenes* with his filthy feet in greater arrogance treads on sumptuous carpets; then *Plato* whose sumptuous carpets they were; Neither is a Christian high minded towards the poor. If speake of moderation, *Pythago-*

ras

rus among the *Tuniens*, and *Zeno* among them of *Priene*, play the Tyrants, when as a Christian hath not the ambition to be in the least power or office over the people among whom hee lives; if wee treat of contentment in mind, *Lycurgus* will famish himselfe, because the *Lacedemonians* went about but to reforme and amend his lawes; A Christian even when condemned to die, is thankfull to those that condemne him. If question of faithfullnesse in things committed to anothers trust, *Anaxagoras* refuseth the restitution of goods left with him, to his guests; A Christian even by those that are not Christians is reckoned trusty, because made proofe they have of his fidelity. If touch on lowlinesse, I find *Aristotle*, made his friend *Hermias* goe shamefully from the place he had assumed; A Christian offers wrong to no body, no not his greatest enemie. The same *Aristotle*, in designe to governe *Alexander*, the eafier, flatters him with as much infamy, as *Plato Dionysius*, when for good cheere hee soothed up the Tyrant in his liberty. *Aristippus*, in the midst of his purple, carrying the markes of great severity in his lookes, gives himselfe over to all kind of excesses: And *Hippias*, when about to betray his countrey, is suddenly murdered: an act of barbarous revenge never yet undertooke by a Christian to a man linked with him in the interest of the same Religion, though with never so much fury persecuted by them. But some will say even among us, there are a people that gives themselves the liberty of doing evill, that free themselves from subjection to our lawes, from any

what ever exact observation of what legally commanded by us. It is true, there are some such, but so soone as they fall into this disorder, wee hold them no more for Christians. But, contrarily, these Philosophers, notwithstanding the irregularity of their lives, keepe still with you the name of wise men, and the honour which appertaineth to so glorious a title; so then what resemblance is there betweene a Philosopher, and a Christian, a Disciple of Greece, and a Disciple of Heaven, a mind desirous of vaine reputation, and a soule that seekes his salvation onely? A man that is vertuous in words onely, and hee that is so indeed: one that is wholly occupied in doing good, and another that makes no conscience in committing what ever wickednesses: he that corrupts the truth to establish error, and he that by subduing error renders to truth the beauty of its originall: hee that turnes truth out of doores as a theefe, and steales it away from the sight of men, and hee that keepes it faithfully, that it may bee known by all the world.

CHAP. XLVII.

THe antiquitie of the holy Scriptures, which I have heeretofore discovered, is a famous testimony, which may serve mee still in this place, to let you know this holy booke is a treasure from whence these wise men of the world who are

come

come since, have taken all, they have left to posterity: this proofe is proper, but long; and the onely thing that hinders mee to undertake it, is the feare I have to make too great a volume. Is there any Poet or Sophister that hath not drawn what he hath of excellent concernment from the rich sources of the Prophets? It is in these delicious fountains the Philosophers plunged themselves to qualifie the desires of their minds, and some people have also banished Philosophy from them, as the *Thebans*, those of *Sparta*, and of *Argos*, because their Philosophers corrupting what they had read in the writings of these men sent from God, composed pestilent doctrines, which a man could not heare but with horror: so these people, who as I have said, laboured not but for glory, and had no affection but for eloquence, having met in the holy Scriptures, with things that might be gainfull to them made their profit of them, and as they had no intention but to content their curiosity, accommodated the same to their designes, not acknowledging its holinesse, which should have hindred them from corrupting it; and not understanding well the sense, then covered with cloudes, and which the Jewes themselves, for whom the Prophets had written it, apprehended not, but thorough shadows that wrapt them up. They saw truth there with simplicity alwayes accompanied; but humane prudence blinded with her errors, not willing to believe in this truth which was shewed to her, remaines more doubtfull and unresolved then before; from whence it comes these wise men of the world have

formed opinions variable and uncertaine touching the same things they found, or declared proved with infallible certainty. They have learnt onely from the holy Scriptures there is one God, and the opinions they have had of the nature of God divides them into many sects: One affirming God hath no body: other, that he is corporeall, (as the *Platonicks* & *Stoicks*) one, that God is composed of Atomes; other, of numbers, (as *Epicurus* & *Pythagoras*) one, that his substãce is of fire (as it seemes to *Heraclitus*) the *Platonicks* hold he takes care of the conduct of the world: contrarily, the *Epicurians* that he remaines in an idle tranquillity without exercise, & meddles not at all with human things. The *Stoicks* believe God hath his seat out of the Universe, from whence he manageth & removes, as a potter turnes his frame. The *Platonicks* put him in the world, and say, hee governes it within, as hee that holds the rudder of a ship; so they are of different opinions concerning the nature of the world, to know whether it hath not been made, or whether it hath not beene; if it must end one day, or must last alwaies; so, they are not agreed of the condition of our soule; some maintaine, it is divine and eternall; others, that it is subject to death: each of them hath spoken according to his sense, given way to his thoughts, changed, and corrupted the truth, to follow their owne motions; but wee must not wonder, if Philosophers have made this worke of the oracles of the old Testament, seeing wee have amongst us people, who shew themselves children worthy of such fathers, infecting the purity of our new Gospell with

with the corruption of their owne opinions, animated with the spirit of Philosophy; and who by this onely way, which brought to the knowledge of the truth, have drawn many crooked paths, wherein men cannot engage themselves without losing themselves: whereof I would willingly advertise you that the diversity found betweene us, makes you not imagine our profession is like that of the Philosophers, and that you judge not ill of the truth, because wee defend it by different meanes, and are divided in our doctrine. These people that are seperated from us, have violated the faith of Jesus Christ, and wee beat downe their errours by this onely exception, that the true rule of truth is that which hath beene taught by our Master, and transmitted to us by these holy persons, who had the happinesse to heare his word, and receive his Divine instructions.

We shall shew in another place, that all which is not conformable to this rule, hath beene invented by new Doctors, who came not till after the blessed companions of the son of God; to destroy the truth, men have made use of truth it selfe by the suggestions of the spirits of error, who have inspired them to fight with it with its owne armes; they are they who have excited them to corrupt so saving a doctrine: they are they, have invented fables, wherewith its holinesse hath been prophaned, that by their resemblance, they take away the beliefe from truth, or rather get it for themselves. They would ruinate faith by this detestable tricke, perswading men they must not believe Christians, by the same reason not

believe the Poets, nor Philosophers; or rather, wee should believe the Poets and Philosophers, because not believe the Christians. It is this sacrilegious imitation, that makes them laugh at us, when wee preach the last judgement; the Poets and Philosophers, upon the ground of this truth, set up a tribunall in Hell. They mocke at us also, when wee threaten them with eternall torments, which are those hidden flames the earth shuts up in her bosome, and are reserved by the justice of God, as in a treasure, for the punishment of the wicked: for these prophaners have invented, that there is in hel a River of burning fire; if wee speake to them of Paradise, a place fild with agreeable and Divine beauties, ordained to be the residence of the soules of the blessed, and seperated from the world by the interposition of this Zone of fire which God hath put before it, presently the Elysian fields comes in their thoughts; they imagine that there is that delicious place wee declare unto them. Tell mee I pray you where the Poets and Philosophers have drawn these things so like to our doctrine? if it bee not from our bookes and Discipline? if they have drawne them from our Discipline, they have without doubt the prerogative of antiquity upon them; therefore it followes, that what wee teach is truer, and ought to have more beliefe then all these vaine opinions. In effect these opinions are but the shaddowes of truth, and seeing the world hath given faith to these vailes, they ought rather to believe the truth that is the substance. If the Poets and Philosophers are the first

authors

authors of these things which they have written, it must bee then that our Discipline is but the figure of that which is come after it, which nature permits not, because the shadow is not before the body, and the figure cannot have beene before the truth, from whom it takes its originall.

CHAP. XLVIII.

IT must bee acknowledged that the usage wee receive from you, and that you give the Philosophers, are very different: if a Philosopher sets out what *Laberius* left in writing, according to the opinion of *Pythagoras*, that a mule is changed into a man, & a woman into an adder; if he displayes al the cunning of his eloquence, if hee sets out with addresse all his arguments to settle this opinion, is it not true that hee moves your minds? that he drawes you to his partie? that hee forceth you to believe you must abstaine from the flesh of beasts? and that after there are some found with you, that make some scruple to taste it, because in eating a peece of beefe, they feare to devoure some of their auncestors? contrarily, if a Christian assures you, a man that is dead shall live againe one day, that hee that is in the grave shall come out and take againe the same forme he had, hee is abused by the people, not onely with blowes of the fist, but also with stones cast at him. Now, mee thinkes, there is much blindnesse

blindneſſe in receiving the opinions of theſe Philoſophers, and in condemning the Doctrine wee propoſe to you upon the point of the reſurrection; for if there bee reaſon perſwades that the ſoule of a dead man reenters into a body; why may not wee believe it enters into the ſame body again; and returnes into the ſame matter from whence it is ſeperated; ſeeing the effect of a true Reſurrection, is to be that which it was before? the ſoules after they have changed their bodies, according to the opinion of *Pythagoras*, and his Diſciples, are no more the ſame they were heretofore: becauſe they could not become what they are nor, unleſſe they ceaſe to be what they were: wee might find wherewithall to jeſt on this ſubject, if diſpoſed to ſport our minds, and entertaine our leaſure with mirth: it wou'd bee a very pleaſant thing to enquire in what beaſts, perſons have beene changed that lived before us: but it is better we reſolve to determine the truth of this propoſition. We ſay then, it is more convenient to the dignity of our nature, to believe man ſhall become man againe, that every one in particular ſhall riſe againe to be the ſame he was, and informed with the ſame ſoule, that animated him, with the ſame qualities wherewith he was endowed, although the body receive ſome change in his exterior figure. In ſum, the deſigne of the Univerſall judgement, being the effectuall reaſon of our reſurrection, it is neceſſary the ſame man that is dead live againe, that God may recompence, or puniſh for his good or evill actions the ſame perſons. And the ſame bodies that are in

the

the dust of the grave must appeare at this judgement, because the soule cannot suffer alone, and without a sensible matter, that is to say, without its flesh, and as it hath not sinned but in its flesh, it also hath not merited but with its flesh the punishments the justice of God hath ordained for its crimes. But you say to mee, how can it bee that a matter reduced to dust should represent it selfe? consider with thy selfe O man! that makest this objection to me, thou shalt find in thy owne person the proofe of so rare a miracle. Thinke on what thou wast before created, thou wert nothing. For if any thing before, thou wouldst remember it. Thou then that wert nothing before thy creation, and when cease to live, shalt returne to nothing: why canst thou not once againe bee brought out of nothing by the will of the same Creator, who created thee of nothing? will there come any new thing unto thee? Thou who before wert not, art made again: after thou ceasest to live heere, thou shalt bee restored in the resurrection, and after this wee would have thee aske by what meanes God will rayse thee up againe?

But seeing hee made no difficulty to make thee what before thou wert, thou oughtest not to thinke that hee finds any to an easier thing, that is, to make thee what thou wert heeretofore. Can one doubt of the power of God, that hath made this vast and immense bodie of the world of that which was not? of nothing, and out of a *Chaos*? and who at the same moment animated this world with a spirit, that gi-

veth life to all things? hee hath given testimonies, that witnesse, and sets forth examples to us of the resurrection of man. Wee see every day, the light after it hath lost its darkenesse, takes it againe; and by turnes the darkenesse dissipates it selfe, and succeeds to light againe: the Starrs deprived of their splendor, as if they were not, in being clothed with their luster seeme to bee re-animated: the time begins at the same terme where it finished; the fruits fall off the trees, and come again in their season; the corne puts not forth its eares plentifully, till after its former graine is corrupted, and rotten in the earth: all things in perishing are conserved, spring againe after dead; and thou, O man! that shouldst bee so glorious by the excellency of thy nature, if thou knewest it, and that learnest also by the Oracle of *Apollo*, thy selfe to bee master of all creatures, as well of them that die not to live again, as of those must die to rise again. Is it possible thou shouldst die to bee no more? and that thy death ought not have a return to life again? No certainly, in what place soever thy soul is separated from thy body, whatsoever element hath destroyed thy being, swallowed up, consumed, and reduced thee to nothing; it shall render thee all entire, because nothing, and all the Universe appertain to one and the same Lord. It follows by this discourse, say you, that we must alwayes die, and always rise again: and I answer you; If God, the great Lord of all things hath so ordayned it, so it shall bee whether you like of it or no: but that which his providence

dence hath ordayned touching the Resurrection of man, is conducted by a more equitable order: Its a mystery newly revealed by his only Son Jesus Christ. This wisdome that hath composed the Universe with substances of different natures, and makes it subsist in a body, by the uniting of so many contrary qualities, of voyd, and solid, of things animate, and inanimate, of that in our power, and that above us, of life, and death, the same hath ordayned time, with this difference of conditions, that this first part in which wee live, since the very Creation of the World, was perpetually to the terme that must accomplish the number of its yeares; and the other part that followes, and which we stay for, is infinite in its durance, and perpetuates unto eternity. Betweene these two, there is a middle time, which after arrived to its end, the beauty of this Universe, which must end one day also, and is for the present, hung up before all eternity, shall change face, and then all mankind shall arise and appeare before the same God, to bee recompensed according to all the good or evill we have done upon earth, either with infinite joy, or paine in the world to come. After which wee shall neither die, nor rise againe any more. But without other change keepe still the being wee appeare in at the howre of our Universall resurrection; that is to say, the servants of God, being clothed with the substance of eternity, which is that of the Angels, shall remaine alwayes united to God; and the Prophane, and those that violate the

lawes of God, be buried in flames, where suffer perpetually without consuming; because pertake of the nature of this fire, which is of such a sublime quality, as shall make them live in paines without being subject to corruption. The Philosophers acknowledge the difference betweene hidden fire, and fire discovered to our eyes: so the fire ordained for the use of man, is other then that which serves for the justice of God: whether it formes the lightnings which heaven darts upon the earth, or disgorgeth it selfe from the deepe Cavernes of mountaines; it consumes not that it burnes, it repaires rather that it destroyes, so that the mountaines maintaine themselves in their order, and man is strucke with the lightening without offending his body, or being reduced to ashes by the fire wherewith hee hath been touched.

This miracle is a proofe of the nature of these eternall flames, and an example of the vertue they have by the decree of the judgement of God, to preserve punishments, wherewith his justice will punish the wicked; the mountaines burne, and remaine intire: why should it not so come to passe with men found hainous offenders before God, and enemies of their Creator?

CHAP.

CHAP XLIX.

THese things while wee declare to you under the notion of truth, in us alone you hold for presumptuous assertions, when the self same uttered by your Philosophers, you esteem admirable lights of mind, and sublime sciences. They are wise, we simple: they deserve to be honoured, wee to bee laughed at: yea, I dare say, more severly punished. But suppose the doctrine wee preach false, admit it consists in vain opinions; if vain, they are necessary for the salvation of mens souls. If follies, wonderfull profitable; in regard they who beleeve them, are thereby excited to live well, for fear of eternall punishment if they doe not; and againe if they doe, in hope of eternall felicity. Therefore it behooves us not to call these things false and impertinent, which so much import us, to find true; neyther condemne that which produceth nothing but good: which granted, the opinions you have for persecuting our doctrine, rather then the doctrine wee professe, should passe for imaginations conceived without ground.

Again, this doctrine of ours being so profitable to men, deserves not to bee held impertinent: if, notwithstanding, you will have it to bee false, and ridiculous, you must yet acknowledge its innocency;

and consequently, that it deserves not to draw punishments upon the Christians. Know we not, that when other men have given way to vain, and fabulous opinions, they have not beene reprooved, your Lawes have not been armed with so much severity, as to punish them, they having told freely their thoughts without being treated as Criminalls. The worst a man can doe to those, who after their example, publish their follies, is, to laugh at them; Wee finde not that ever they persecuted them with sword, and fire, that they have beene exposed, for that only, to the infamy of gibbets, and rage of wild beasts. This crueltie is not exercised, but against Christians; and it is a strange thing, that not onely this people blind in their passions, take delight to see us suffer; but some also among you, cause our bloud inhumanely to be shed, to gain the favour of the vulgar, and by this means seek glory in their injustice: as if, all you can doe to us, dependeth not of our good will. In effect, I am a Christian, if I will be one, and therefore you cannot condemne mee, if I will not have you condemne mee. Now seeing you cannot use the power you have on mee, unless I will, it follows, that it is of my will, you have this power, and not of the authoritie of your Magistracie. Therfore in vaine doe this people rejoice at our torments; our punishments that make them rejoice, make us rejoice also, because wee had rather die, then lose the grace of God. Contrarily, they that hate us, should be afflicted, and not rejoice at our evils, because they make us obtain what we desire.

CHAP.

CHAP. L.

THerefore ſay you to us, what reaſon have you to complaine of the evills wee cauſe you to ſuffer, ſeeing you will needs ſuffer them? are not you obliged rather to love thoſe that make you endure the puniſhments you deſire? it is true, wee are reſolved to endure them; but the reaſon is, becauſe, without doing worſe, wee know not how to avoid them: even as no body expoſeth himſelfe to the fury of war, by his good will, becauſe, he cannot come neare it, without being afraid, and hazarding his life, and yet they, that find themſelves engaged there, fight with all their might, and whatſoever averſion they had before, they rejoyce when they get the victory, becauſe they acquire glory, and enrich themſelves with the ſpoiles of their enemies. We enter into a combate, when we appeare before your Tribunalls, and there it is, wee fight for the truth, in perill of our lives; our victory is, to make this truth raigne, for which wee contend, and the fruit wee have of it, is the glory of pleaſing God, and the precious booty of eternall life: in the meane time we periſh, but it is after we have beene conquerors of errour; ſo wee are conquerors when wee periſh, and, at the ſame inſtant we periſh, wee are freed out of your hands, and receive our liberty. Give us if you will, names taken from the inſtruments

ments, of our puniſhments, to wit, from the poſts where you tie us, and from the bavins you kindle about us, when you burne our bodies, and reduce them to aſhes; this is the ornament of our victory; this our roabe of State; this pitifull condition wherein your cruelty puts us, is our triumphant chariot. You muſt not wonder then, if we do not pleaſe them, that overcome us, our conſtancy makes us paſſe with them, for mad and deſperate, and yet with you, theſe actions of rage and deſpaire are as ſtandards, under which vertue ſeekes glory, and marcheth to the conqueſt of reputation. *Scevola*, of his owne motion, left his hand in the flames: O greatneſſe of courage! *Empedecoles* precipitated himſelfe into the burning of Mount *Ætna*: O ſtrength of mind! the foundreſſe of Carthage caſt her ſelfe into the fire, to avoid a ſecond marriage: O commendation of chaſtitie! *Regulus*, not willing his life ſhould coſt his countrey the ſetting free ſo many of its enemies, ſuffered in every part of his body: O generous man, and victorious in his captivity! *Anaxarchus*, ſo long as they pounded his body, as barley beat in a morter, beat, beat, ſaith he, the bladder of *Anaxarchus*, it is not *Anaxarchus* you outrage: O generoſitie of a Philoſopher, that in ſo miſerable an end ceaſed not to laugh! I ſpeake not of them, that kill themſelves with their owne hands, or, have taken an eaſier death, to merit a vaine prayſe withall You approve alſo of contentions in torments, and honour is the priſe you give them that ſuffer them. A Courtiſan of *Athens*, after ſhe had wearied her executioners,

ners, and bit her tongue between her teeth, in casting it into the Tyrants face who made her suffer, threw to him the instrument of her speech, that if shee were overcome by the force of tortures shee could not, if shee would, discover them, who were of the conspiracy. *Dionysius* enquiring of *Zeno Eleates*, what good, Philosophy brought to men; and the Philosopher having answered him that it taught them to contemne death, hee signed his answer with his blood, unto the last groanes of his life, by the inhumanity of this Tyrant who made him cruelly to die by whipping. The rods which tryed the patience of the *Lacedemonians*, and made them feele the sharpest stroakes thereof in the sight of their neareſt kindred, who, in the meane time, exhorted them to endure it constantly, gave them so much the more honour, as they lost or had their bloud spilt more in abundance; O lawfull glory! becaufe it is of the world; for it is the neglect of death, all that the cruelty of men hath insupportable, is not imputed to an enraged obstinacy, and a desperate resolution; it is permitted to whosoever desires, to suffer for his Countrey, Kingdome, Friend, that which is not permitted to suffer for Gods cause; it is strange, you abhorr our constancy, and yet you make Statues for all these people; you set up their Statues with rare inscriptions; engrave Elogies in stone, and marble for them, that they may last to Eternity; and, by your publicke monuments, strive, to the utmost of your power, to give, in some kinde, a resurrection to the dead; and, contrarily, you

hold him for a mad man, that endures torments for the name of God, hopes from him, for a true resurrection. Continue, O magistrates, so full of integrity, juster in the opinion of this kind of people, if you sacrifice the Christians to fury, torment us, apply your tortures to us, judge us, and, in the end, exterminate us; your injustice is the proofe of our innocence; therefore, God will have us endure, that our sufferings may make our purity shine the clearer. And indeed, a few daies since, you condemned a Christian maide to bee rather prostituted to an infamous corrupter of her chastity, then to bee exposed to the rage of a Lyon; you acknowle 'ge there is no punishment, nor kind of death which is so intolerable to Christians, as the losse of their chastity: but, doe what you please, all inventions the most exquisite cruelty can advise you unto, are to no purpose, so far are they from profiting you, that contrarily they draw all the world to our Religion. The oftner you make a harvest of the Christians, the oftner their number encreaseth: their blood is a seed which dies not on the earth, but puts forth prosperously. Many, among you, have laboured, to perswade men to suffer constantly paine, & death, (as Cicero in his *Tusculans*, *Seneca* in his Treatise against casuall things, *Diogenes*, *Pyrrhon*, & *Callinicus*,) but Christians have better taught constancy, by the examples they have given, in supporting patiently so many evills, then all the Philosophers, with al their discourses. This same obstinacy, you reproach us with, is an excellent mistresse of truth, which we believe: for, who is it not,

that

that striveth with contemplation, to seeke what it is? who after made his search, comes not on our side? who, having embraced the faith of Jesus Christ, desires not to suffer for him, that by his sufferings he may get the infinite treasures of the grace of God, and that, in the price of his blood, they may obtaine the pardon of their faults; for the remission of all our sins is the assured recompense of our punishments. This is the reason, that when they read your sentences of death unto us wee render you thankes; because by a happy emulation that meets betweene the judgements of God, and the judgement of men, at the same instant when you condemne us heere below God pronounceth our absolution in Heaven.

FINIS.

FINIS.

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FINIS.

ERRATA.

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p. 25. l. 3. r. Marcus Aurelius.
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p. ibid. l. 12. r. Buffoons.
p 69 l. 24. r. Athenian Pallas.
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Page 93 line 6. and 7. read *Daemon.*
p. 96. l. 26. r. retained.
p 100. l. 25. r. when we conjure.
p. 103. l. 30. r. what is it that Plato
p. 122. l. 14. and 22. r. Genii
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p. 146. l. 25. r. drought.